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EDITED BY

LEO JUNG

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SECOND SERIES

Edited by

RABBI LEO JUNG, PH.D.

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OF

WALTER HERBERT HERSKOVITS

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PREFACE

THE Second Series of *The Jewish Library* will, it is hoped, continue to convey the riches of Jewish life and lore. We must be able to see Judaism as a whole. Because they lack that ability, some American rabbis are embracing humanism and other fads, as if the questions involved were unheard of; as if the answers attempted were just born in the minds of ambitious reconstructionists, reformers and their youthful followers.

By seeing Judaism historically, some of the prophets of the latest "isms" will be able to view their messages in their true perspective, thus, perhaps, regaining both balance and modesty. Seeing Judaism as a totality, as expressed in Jewish life, will bring light to the disaffected. The intellectual may find his niche somewhere in the spacious halls of the Torah. The neo-Chassid may attain to his haven of refuge—for none maintains that "There is no space for him to feel at home in Jerusalem." He who values mental discipline above all will here think with Dr. Daiches about "Dogma in Judaism." Those to whom interpretation is dear will choose "Worship as a Mode of Study." On the basis of the Torah, a wide margin is left to individuality, wide spaces for romance and relativity. The wedge between Fundamentalism and Judaism, made deeper by Prof. Isaacs' article, will enlighten the student upset by today's salesmen of religious unrest.

Dr. Gaster's essay reveals a vital aspect of the drama of the Jew.

Dr. Hertz's article will give joy to the educator. The chapters by Prof. Nathan Isaacs and Dr. David I. Macht are vastly interesting not only in subject matter but also in approach. According to the Torah, the purpose of the dietary laws is to sanctify us, to assure our racial and moral integrity. Dr. Macht's genius for research, however, continues to uncover their inherent hygienic value.

Dr. Isaacs discusses the literary value of Genesis without reference to the origin of the Torah, which is outside of his present scope. Reverend Collins' remarkable exposition of *The Duties of the Heart* will clarify the central thought of Baḥya's famous work.

Some of us have been too exclusively Halakhists; others have been attracted by Agada alone. The upholder of religion should not be a jack-of-all-trades. But Judaism, as expressed through Jewish life, is more than religion. Jewish life has partaken of glory and terror, of study and achievement, of poetry and politics. The gaon and the chalutz, the historian and the pilgrim, are each part of Jewish life. The Talmud, as the record of Jewish life, embraces Din Torah and folklore, mystery, song, homely virtues, ethical reproof.

The Jewish Library is meant to present this human symphony, this infinite width and depth, humor and pathos; this surging faith and tested wisdom. The Torah is beyond time and space. There are no geographical limits to Jewish life. Spain is there; the tolerance of the Moors and the inquisition of the Church; Germany with Reuchlin and Treitschke; the

teshubot of Adret and the songs of Emanuel of Rome; the philosophy of Abravanel and the madness of Sabbatai Zevi. *The Jewish Library* should thus help Israel "to understand himself." (Isaiah i, 3.)

The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America has sponsored *The Jewish Library*. Professors Moses Hyamson, Nathan Isaacs and Moses Jung, in addition to Dr. David de Sola Pool, have helped with kind advice and suggestions. Rabbi Abraham Burstein has read the proofs and prepared the index with his wonted accuracy. To all these friends, to the contributors, to the editors of the *London Jewish Chronicle* and *The Jewish Forum*, many thanks.

LEO JUNG.

Kislev, 5691.
November, 1930.

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I

THE ROMANCE OF THE HEBREW ALPHABET

BY

M. GASTER

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I

THE ROMANCE OF THE HEBREW ALPHABET

It is a strange tale which the letters of the Hebrew alphabet unfold. We look at them scarcely realizing what a tremendous history lies behind them, what a vast importance they have had in the civilization of mankind, what a vital part they have played in the history of our people, what a far-reaching contribution they have made in establishing a definite character of Judaism; and in turn, what use, in the course of ages, has been made of them.

In the truest sense of the word, it is a tale of romance, with its battles, its victories, its defeats, its perplexing vicissitudes—the constant changes to which it has been subjected by tendencies often most diverse and with results wholly unexpected.

It was one of the greatest achievements of the human spirit to find a graphic expression, to capture from the intangible something of a tangible character to fix definitely the sound and, what is of infinitely greater importance, the thought of man. It is by means of writing only that human history can be recorded; and through writing that the progress of mankind can be assured.

There is no greater teaching than that of history.

There is no greater source of satisfaction and pride, of despondency and weakness, than to look into the mirror which history holds up to each succeeding generation. Of what satisfaction would be the prowess of man unless he were able to leave behind a tangible record of his work? How, in a definite manner, could man formulate his progress other than by finding a means of perpetuating it? How could everlasting truths be proclaimed to mankind unless they were engraved or written down for the memory of man?

It is not the intention of the author to give a history of writing. That has already been done by others. And still others, in attempts to decipher those monuments of old dug up from the mounds of Assyria and Babylon or from other corners of the ancient world, will continue it. But every one who has followed the splendid achievement in the deciphering of these ancient monuments, knows that the question of the origin of writing is still unanswered and that no key as yet has been found to the answer. The reason is a very simple one. It leads us straight to our own Hebrew alphabet. None of those other writings is executed in that form. The exception is only some inscriptions of an uncertain date found in Crete and elsewhere. These show signs which resemble the Hebrew alphabet. It is necessary, therefore, to make it perfectly clear wherein lies the difference between the Hebrew alphabet and those other writings which hitherto have come to light.

It is the Hebrew alphabet only in which every sound, as sound, finds adequate expression. There can be no difficulty, therefore, in distinguishing one sound from the other. Each of these, moreover, is definitely

marked. And though dialectic pronunciation has slightly changed the value of one or the other, the form in which the Hebrew Bible and the Holy Writings give them, invests each letter, nevertheless, with a definite sound, and fixes it with a specific meaning and value. Not so, however, with those other hitherto discovered means of writing. They were of a pictorial character, traces of which have been preserved even in our alphabet. (But of this element we shall treat later on.) Instead of writing the word, a picture of it was drawn, just as is done in the advertisements of today and in other pictures of an educational character. The child is taught to read by pictures connected in one way or another, more or less, with the sound the child has to learn.

What the spirit has once conquered it never loses. Whatever has become the possession of man is never given up; it is only put to a different use. And so, much of the old pictorial writing has survived the ages and has come down to us precisely as it was used in olden time. Put into the service of present-day education, it differs slightly in application, remaining fundamentally as it was. We find in the ancient Egyptian writing, figures of all kinds representing the things to be read, carefully cut and chiseled in the rock and, therefore, easily rounded off. But, when the same picture had to be reproduced on a soft clay tablet as in Babylon they had no rocks as in Egypt; they had only the clay of the soil which was kneaded and molded to reduce round figures to strokes. And thus, by using a triangular pointer, they made signs in the clay which looked like triangular nails.

A difficulty arose, however, when names had to be

reproduced. The next step, then, in presenting the same picture was no longer the problem of representing a word or a sentence or a meaning. To overcome this difficulty, however, a part of the picture was used to designate part of the letter of the name. This method was called syllabaric, consisting always of a consonant and a vowel.

Thus far, then, the multifarious signs found on so many inscriptions strewn over the land of ancient Assyria, over the land of the Hittites, and over those lands further East and North, belong to this syllabaric form.

Nor is the Chinese writing different in its essence from the writing of ancient Assyria and Babylon; for the various and numerous lines which compose the sign, in many cases, can be traced back to primitive pictures of the objects so designated.

It was a tremendous stride in a great conquest when all these lines and signs and symbols were discarded in favor of single letters for writing without the incumbrance of double meaning.

The history of ancient writing is in itself an interesting chapter of spirit wrestling with matter, and of the successful endeavor of man to procure a permanent representation of his speech and thought.

It is a remarkable fact that we now find among the Semitic nations only this simple alphabet consisting precisely of as many letters as there are sounds in their speech. Attempts have been made to explain away the Semitic origin of the Hebrew alphabet. All the ancient traditions, however, are unanimous in recognizing the fact that the first alphabet introduced in Europe was the one brought by the Phoenicians from the East and that not only were the letters of the

alphabet brought but also their names, and that these names have remained generally unchanged to this very day.

Our word "alphabet" is practically the same as the word "alphabeta" of the ancient Phoenicians who, in later pre-Christian centuries, were an Aramaic-speaking people. It is the same word, moreover, of our own Hebrew, "Aleph beth." Attempts have been made to deny the Semitic origin of the Phoenicians, and to ascribe their origin to the "mythical" Hittite. But no Phoenician inscription has been discovered hitherto which is not written in the pure Phoenician-Aramaic, or Palestinian language.

How and when this alphabet was evolved is a problem that has not yet been solved. But there is no inscription so old, nor is there a monument so ancient, which can vie in antiquity with the Jewish script. It is just as reasonable to assume, therefore, that the origin of the alphabet is to be sought, with a greater degree of success, among the Jews than among the Phoenicians or the other peoples of the Semitic race.

Before we examine the Hebrew alphabet, however, it must be stated that the one now in use among us is not the ancient Hebrew alphabet. The letters of this one differ very considerably from those signs and symbols of the well-known Phoenician inscriptions.

For a long time the Jews had been using the archaic alphabet, very closely resembling the Phoenician and the Moabite. This archaic alphabet has been preserved by the Samaritans. But before further tracing its history, its evolution and its change, it is expedient to indicate the significance attached to this method of writing Hebrew.

II

It might be of interest to begin with, and to dwell briefly on, the names and the characters of the alphabet. Both the ancient Hebrew characters and the later ones have very many points in common. The former had been used as late as the time of the Maccabeans. The coins which were minted by the Maccabeans were engraved with the ancient Hebrew lettering still in circulation at that time and well known among the people, and not with our present-day alphabet in the square writing. Let us now examine some of these letters (space does not permit of entering in detail into the description of all of them).

It is sufficient for the exigency of the moment to envisage the old Greek alphabet, turned from left to right and often placed on its side, to realize the original character of the letters as taken over by the Greeks. "Aleph," in Hebrew, means an ox. If we place the capital "A" on one of its sides and prolong the stroke in the middle, above and below the two lines, we have an exact duplicate of the old Phoenician and Hebrew "Aleph," like the head of an ox with its two horns. The next letter, "Beth," means a house; it shows the outlines of a well of a house. The third letter, "Gimel," has the outlines of the neck of a camel. Next we have "Vav," the hook or nail. Then comes "Zain," the knife or the dagger. "Yod" (Yad), the hand represented in the old Hebrew by three strokes downwards (the three fingers), is united on top by a horizontal line. "Kaf" is the cupped hand used, perhaps, for drinking water in the primitive way. "Lamed" is the goad of the ox. "Mem," in the old

script a wavy line, represents the slowly moving waves of the water. "Nun" stands for the fish. "Samekh," in the old form, is a crook. "Ain," the eye, in the old script is a circle which is represented in our modern alphabet by the letter "O." "Peh" is the open mouth. "Zadik" is the angler's hook. "Kof" is the back of the head resting on the neck. "Resh" is the full head. "Shin," the teeth, both in the old and in the other scripts, is represented by three upward strokes. And the final letter of the alphabet, "Tav," is probably the mark which used to be made on household beasts. We shall omit a few of the letters, the meanings of which are doubtful. Besides, the archaic forms lend themselves with difficulty to clear interpretation; but the letter "Ḥet" may mean a net and "Tet" may mean a basket.

This detailed description of the alphabet has a definite meaning and importance. It will help us to realize the milieu in which such an alphabet could have been invented. A great many of the signs, as will be observed, are taken from the human body—the hand, the eye, the head, the neck, the teeth, and so on. Others of these, as will be seen, suggest a primitive pastoral life—the ox, the camel, the goad, and the mark on them. The only weapon mentioned is the knife or the dagger—Zain. Then, we have those direct references to the waters of the river—the fish, the net, the hook, and the wavy water. All this points to a primitive state of society such as the Israelites had during their sojourn in the wilderness. And, even though they may have been influenced by the principle of writing in Egypt, this alphabet, nevertheless, was purely an independent invention by a primitive Semitic people.

The pictures represented are of a primitive character, corresponding fully with the circumstances and conditions under which the Israelites lived.

The letters found in this alphabet correspond wholly and solely, moreover, with the speech of the Israelites. In those other Semitic languages or dialects found in Palestine there is often confusion between the gutturals. But in this alphabet of the Israelites the gutturals are marked off from one another with clarity and distinctness. Furthermore, if this alphabet had been borrowed from those other languages, there would have been confusion between the letters "Ḥet," "He," and "Ain;" and, too, there would have been other incongruities found in those other languages. All of which must serve to prove conclusively that this alphabet could not have been borrowed from any source; that, unmistakably, it was invented by the Israelites.

It is a very remarkable fact that in the whole of the Book of Genesis, and in the Book of Exodus up to chapter 17, we do not find the word for "writing." The passage in Genesis, chapter 5, verse 1, where the word "Sepher" occurs, must not be translated: "This is the *book* of the generations of Adam;" but "This is the *record* or the *history* told of the generations of Adam." It was at a much later time that the record was written down or transferred from the oral to the written documents. And so not until Exodus, chapter 17, verse 14, do we find the first reference to a book of records. Thus, even though the origin of this Hebrew alphabet cannot be traced to an earlier period than that of the Exodus, or to any other nation in spite of the inscriptions which have been found in South Arabia—the date of which cannot be determined, but

is probably of a much later beginning—we may be justified in assuming that, in our ancient Hebrew alphabet, we have the oldest and, at the same time *the* alphabet to which modern civilization and progress owe their source.

But the history of the alphabet in itself was not concluded with its invention. Changes have supervened which have had a lasting influence on the life of the Jews, their history, their civilization and, not infrequently, on the character which their religious beliefs have taken. At one time, this writing, hitherto engraven on hard substances, came to be used on softer material as well. The papyri are chief among these, although, curiously enough, no record is found in the Bible of the use of this kind of material. On the other hand, however, the use of some kind of ink is distinctly referred to, and the material upon which it was written was potsherds. The use of skins belongs to a much later date than that of the Bible. As for parchment, it is well known that the invention of it was due to the King of Pergamum; hence, the name is no older than the first or second century B.C.E.

And thus it came about that instead of those earliest sharply outlined strokes, more rounded strokes drawn by a brush came into use. This script was used later on, especially by those Jews who had learned from the Arameans, and it had become the official script of the Persian court. It was in this rounded-off transitional form that the Jews of Assyene—today Assuan—wrote their famous letters to the High Priest of Jerusalem and to the Governor of Samaria; the letters which requested protection from the violence of the Egyptian mob, destroyers of their temple at Yeb. The marriage

documents and the settlement documents of the same period among the Jewish garrison in that part of Egypt were written in the same script, too. These documents date from the time of Darius and Artaxerxes, from which we may infer that the grandparent of some of those writers may have been the prophet Jeremiah when he came down to Egypt; for only three generations separated the one from the other. And yet we find the Jews of that time already using this altered alphabet in their own documents!

In Jerusalem itself, after the return from the Exile and under the influence of Zerubabel and later on of Ezra, a definite breach was made with the Samaritans who had come to offer their coöperation to the Jews. It was then, in all probability, that a definite breach was made with the old Hebrew alphabet. The writer has dealt with this problem more fully elsewhere. It is sufficient to indicate here the fact that from that period and onwards, the use of the old Hebrew alphabet ceased, and the one now in use came into being—not exactly in the Biblical form, in which we have it now; but as a modification of the Aramaic and with some reminiscences, as it were, of the old Hebrew.

III

The effect of the change of the alphabet has been tremendous and continues to be so to this very day. Because of that change the breach with the Northern Israelites was intensified and became final. Judaism—that Judaism which recognized Jerusalem as the religious center and saw in the prophets the representatives of the highest religious ideals and the messengers of the future hope—severed its connection with the

other form of ancient Jewish faith. When they left the Northern Tribes, the Samaritans went their own way, following the tradition which thus had been created, and clinging only to the Pentateuch. They rejected all the other books now contained in our Bible and followed a rigid form of observance and interpretation of the law from which the Jews, in an historic and organic development, departed more and more.

The change of alphabet, then, marked also a very important phase in the history of Jewish religion. And by clinging to the changed alphabet the real unity of the House of Israel has been preserved. But the claim to the universal recognition by the Jews did not remain unchallenged. Learning can be acquired only through intensive application and great sacrifice. Nor can the study of a language which has ceased to be spoken be expected of every man, woman, and child. There are people of different grades of education in every society. Scholars, regrettably, form the minority, while the ignorant, unfortunately, form the majority. Such ignorance among the Jews, however, has been greatly minimized throughout the ages by an unrelenting insistence on the knowledge of the Bible and the Prayer Book. Every Jew is made responsible for his every act. No Jew is deemed free from the exercise of religious duty. His attendance at service is intimately bound up with some knowledge of Hebrew. Too, the very remarkable fact, hitherto ignored, cannot be emphasized strongly enough: that in the synagogue or at any religious service, the Bible was never read other than in Hebrew. And so, by the alphabet, the unity of the House of Israel was maintained.

It came about, however, that the people living in different parts of the ancient world forgot not only the language but, what is infinitely worse, the knowledge of the alphabet; and so, in Egypt, they tried to transliterate the Hebrew words into Greek, i.e., to write Greek letters instead of Hebrew letters, although the language remained Hebrew. There is a passage in the Talmud, which has been misinterpreted often. It states: "When the Jews wrote the Bible in Greek, there came darkness upon the world which lasted three days." This has been explained to mean that the Jews considered the *translation* of the Bible into Greek a calamity. People forget that in the same place the story is told of the seventy elders who had gone to Egypt, at the invitation of one of the Ptolemies, to translate the Bible. No objection was raised to this by the Talmud. The wording of the comment concerning it, in each case, however, is different. In the first place, it says: "They *wrote* the Bible in Greek." This means they transliterated the Hebrew alphabet into the Greek alphabet. In the second case, it says: "They translated." But it was the first—the writing of the Bible in Greek—which, for the reasons just mentioned, was considered a calamity. Nor is this an idle conjecture. For portions of that transliterated text are still in existence. The language is Hebrew and the writing is Greek. The result was that which the sages of old had foreseen in that transliteration—a calamity. For indeed, through such procedure, the people were slowly weaned from the knowledge of the language, and finally they were lost to Judaism. Not so, however, was the case of those who clung to the Hebrew alphabet.

In discussing the effect of this transliteration of Hebrew letters into a foreign alphabet—although, originally, the Greek was nothing more than a development from that same Hebrew-Phoenician alphabet—it might be well to note the effect of this very same alphabet used afterwards in an inverse direction. The Jews, through their knowledge of Hebrew writing, were able to write other languages, using the Hebrew alphabet as their means of expression. It has been shown now that Arabic, in its oldest form, represented nothing else but an adaptation of that Hebrew writing in a more cursive form. The Arabs, then, through the means of the Hebrew alphabet, got their alphabet and, with it, their written literature.

The Jews, in their wanderings among the various nations, learned to know the popular languages; and they were probably the very first to write them down. One outstanding feature of the history of our people is that there were very few unlettered among them—those who did not know how to read. On the contrary—and due to the fact that the Jew had to learn to read the Bible and his prayers—it is a conspicuous fact that he became adept in the use of the alphabet and in the value of its sounds. And just as in Arabia the Jewish people had learned to speak and to write Arabic, so in other countries they became conversant with the languages of those countries.

IV

But, curious as it may seem, historical investigation has proved the fact that many, many languages were first written down in Hebrew characters; the Jews, moreover, started many a literature, as it were. If,

at the moment, we turn away from the Hebrew alphabet and think of the Greek or the Latin, this fact will not appear at all surprising. The nations of Europe have used this Latin alphabet, although it was intended originally only to express Latin. Nevertheless, as soon as these nations took over the ancient civilization with its traditions, they learned to write their own language in the Latin script—a script alien to them to such an extent that changes in every language can be seen through the adaptation, as well as through those combinations of letters meant to express the sounds of those different languages. Take the English *sh* or *ch,* for instance, the combination of two letters to express certain sounds not represented in the Latin; and so on, when the alphabet had to be adapted to other languages.

With the Hebrew, the difficulty originally was not serious while it was to be used to express other Oriental languages. And so, it is not surprising to learn that Persian was written in Hebrew characters a very long time before the Arabian conquest supplied the Persians with their alphabet.

There are, doubtless, a few sounds in the Persian language different from those of the Hebrew. But, with a slight accommodation, they easily can be adapted. Indeed, they have been so adapted. But what is even more surprising, Greek was written with Hebrew characters. For reasons of their own, then, the Greeks employed the Hebrew alphabet to express in writing their own language. Here, then, we have a reverse of the process that was mentioned before. Here, indeed, instead of Hebrew being written in Greek characters throughout the period of the Hellenistic

Diaspora, we now have the Jews recognizing the value of their own alphabet and refusing to make use of the Greek.

Before going further, it might be advisable to consider for a moment the consequences to the Jews of their writing Arabic and other Oriental languages in Hebrew characters, as was the case in the Mohammedan Empire almost universally among them, afterward. On the one hand, without affecting their religious point of view, it doubtless kept them in touch with the language of the people. On the other hand, it had a very curious effect with which we shall deal further later on.

Now then, with the growing habit among the choice spirits of the Jews and among their greatest scholars of writing the Arabic language in Hebrew characters—even though they were thoroughly familiar with the pure Arabic writing—they created a specific Jewish-Arabic language. It is a question for the philologist to discuss in detail the peculiarities of the language thus created. But for us it has a psychological value that is of interest. It is characteristic of the Jews that they always have impressed their own way of thinking and of speaking upon the language of the nations in whose midst they have lived. They never have been able to free themselves from the influence of the Bible. And, on many occasions, writing as they did principally for the Jews, they could not avoid introducing Hebrew terms into their writings, especially in those of a theological or a religious character. This is an outstanding feature in the literature written by Jews, notably when they have employed Hebrew characters.

Incidentally, the very same phenomenon is found

among the Samaritans. They, too, write Arabic with Hebrew characters—their own ancient Hebrew script which they have retained unchanged from olden times. And in their writings are to be found, also, a large number of Hebrew words interspersed into the text—those words for which it was difficult to find words of equivalent value in the Arabic. They have carried this so far, moreover, that even when they write with the Arabic alphabet they still retain a large number of Hebrew or Samaritan words in the text, giving the document, so written, a checkered appearance.

This very thing, as pointed out before, has happened in the case of the Jews. And in the perusal of those great works of philosophy by Maimonides and Jehuda Halevi, and those others of the grand poetic school of Spain, the same phenomenon will be observed. It is to be assumed that any scholar undertaking a really critical examination of this language, so peculiar to the Jews—which, as we shall see, is not limited only to the Arabic-speaking—would be well rewarded for his effort.

V

As we have seen earlier, when the split occurred between the Jews and the Samaritans, the outward manifestation of that rupture was their abandonment of the ancient Hebrew script and the adoption by them of an altered and more cursive form, the model of which, to a certain extent, was the current Aramaic or, perhaps, the Palmyran script. Something of a similar nature also occurred when, centuries afterwards, the split between the Jews and the Karaites came about. In this case, however, it neither lasted so long nor was it so universally adopted. Instead of keeping the

Hebrew Bible as it was, with the Hebrew characters then in use, unconsciously, perhaps, and with the object of making the Bible more familiar to the general mass of the people, the Jews of that time followed the example set them by the Greek-speaking Jews of many centuries before.

And so, then, they transliterated the Hebrew Bible into Arabic, quite forgetful of the fact that that Arabic was no more than a development from the old Hebrew. This transliteration resulted in a Bible written in Arabic characters, but with all the vowels and consonants taken from the Hebrew text. The scholars among the Jews of that time, it appears, did not countenance this movement very long; for we find that they wrote with Hebrew characters even when they wrote in Arabic. They were engaged, moreover, in polemics with their opponents, the Rabbanites, as they called them; and, in their controversial writings, they used Arabic as the language, with Hebrew characters, to express it. The Bible, however, which was not the object of polemics—and to the study of which the Karaites had dedicated themselves with special zeal and diligence—curiously enough, was transliterated into Arabic characters.

It is well known how intensely the Karaites studied the Bible—the pivot around which the opposition to the Jews chiefly turned. Nevertheless, these same Karaites did not hesitate to use the Arabic alphabet for the very word of "Holy Writ."

The example set by the Jews in the East was followed by the Jews in the West. And again the fact cannot be too strongly emphasized that we have fragments of all portions of literature, in one form or an-

other, in which the language is that of the European nations and the characters with which it has been expressed are those of the Hebrew alphabet.

VI

The history of the modern languages is a very curious one, and their literary beginnings often are shrouded in obscurity. The reason for this is that, with their smaller beginnings, scant attention, if any, is paid to them. It is the language of the mob which the scholar disdains to consider. The man versed in Latin and in the niceties of the classic literature, looks with contempt at the language of the people; nor does he condescend to write it down. In his judgment it is not worth recording.

The Jewish scholar, however, living with the masses of his people, made it one of his vital interests to become thoroughly acquainted with the doings of those masses. And so, in his communications and correspondence with them, as well as in his business transactions with them—those transactions involved the writing out of documents, of bills, and of other things of commercial character—he used the Hebrew alphabet. Some of the earliest traces of the European languages are found first in glossaries—short explanatory notes in the old commentaries of the Talmud and the Bible. Rashi, the medieval-French commentator, evidently desiring to make his meaning perfectly clear to the general reader whom he presumed to be familiar with the language of the people, did not hesitate to insert frequent French words in his Hebrew commentary. In many other ancient works, moreover, from the eleventh century downward, such glossaries or

interpolations of local expression abound. These have preserved for us the oldest forms of Spanish, of French, of German, and even of Italian. There are, too, many works in these languages written in Hebrew characters, all very old, and all very important from a philological point of view.

Among the oldest monuments of Italian, there is an old prayer-book (now in the British Museum), written by a woman, or prepared for a woman, of the thirteenth century in beautiful penmanship, a magnificent translation of the Hebrew prayer-book in Italian. This translation is certainly not much later than the time of Dante and Boccaccio. A large number of scientific books, moreover, are to be found, medical, astrological, and even poetical, in old Spanish, written in Hebrew characters. Happily, a number of these manuscripts have been preserved; happily, too, it is not very difficult to trace the date of their composition.

Of Provençal monuments, dating back to very high antiquity, some have been published by the late Emperor of Brazil. These are most valuable contributions to the scant literature of the Provençal. The ancient "stars" or "shetarot," belonging to the pre-expulsion period of the Jews in England before the end of the twelfth century, are another proof of the use to which the Hebrew alphabet has been put in recording a foreign language. These are among the oldest monuments of the Norman French.

Thus again we see for the nations throughout Europe the same use made of the Hebrew alphabet—a vehicle of civilization, a means for poetic development, an assistance towards the interpretation of the Bible, a promoter of commercial transactions—long before any of

these nations had ever dreamed of writing their own language with the equally strange Latin alphabet. And all this was made possible because the Jews everywhere used their own Hebrew alphabet.

In Germany, we find that the same process obtained. Some glossaries are found in ancient manuscripts which show the Jewish familiarity with the language of that people. But a huge literature has arisen—to which only passing reference can be given here—starting, perhaps, from the end of the thirteenth century, in which epic and poetic literature of the time was communicated to the Jews simply by being transliterated. The Jews took the Hebrew alphabet and with it wrote the language which they knew best, in that way keeping up an outward unity without breaking their contact with the Bible and the ancient Hebrew literature. In that way, too, a continuation, as it were, and an amplification were effected, drawing the secular literature within the compass of the religious, and giving to the Jews the opportunity of being on equal terms with their neighbors, enjoying the best that the others were able to give, while they retained, inviolate, their own characteristic individuality.

But here again the same phenomenon as that mentioned before can be witnessed—that in order to help the Jewish reader fully to understand this language, many Hebrew words, of necessity, had to be introduced; and so, through the medium of the Hebrew alphabet, this language obtained a unified Jewish character.

Certainly, the Hebrew alphabet had its uses and its benefits. But it had a very serious drawback as well. Before setting down the conclusion, however, it might

be of interest again to go a little further back and to see to what other use the Hebrew alphabet had been put.

Concurrent with the conversion of the Khazars, came about the acceptance of the Hebrew alphabet by them. For, unquestionably, they had had none before. None of those nations had yet attempted to create an alphabet for itself, notwithstanding that there were ancient Greek settlements on the coast of the Black Sea and that the Khazars themselves had been in constant communication—sometimes pacific and at other times hostile—with the Emperors of Byzante. For all that, no trace of any writing has yet been found among the remnants of the ancient inhabitants of the south of Russia. The Khazars, as we know, accepted the Bible. And it is likely that at the same time they endeavored to write in their own language by the use of the Hebrew alphabet. Nor is this mere conjecture. Without the need of entering in a discussion here of the latter fate of the Khazar Empire, it might be well to observe, however, that a great many Jews, joined by the Karaites, had settled in that part of the Old World. These Karaites, to this very day, live in some of the quarters of the Russian Empire once occupied by the Khazars. Among themselves, they speak an ancient Turko-Tartar language which is most akin probably to the language spoken by the Khazars in olden times. At a later date, there was a great Tartar kingdom in the south of Russia, but the ethnic origin of the Khazars is of Eugro-Tartar, and the language partakes entirely of that character. The Karaites then translated the Bible also into this language. And there

were many more writings of a similar linguistic character written in Hebrew characters.

The Tartars themselves, who live in the neighborhood of Kazan, have adopted with their Mohammedan faith the Arabic letters, while the Karaite-Jews have kept to their own ancient Hebrew alphabet.

VII

We have, then, three groups of languages spoken in Europe which the Jews had adopted—taking the word "Jews" in the wider sense—in the writing of which they have employed the Hebrew alphabet. First, we have the German language carried eastward by the Jews to the north of Europe. From the West, from the fifteenth century onwards, we have the Spanish language carried to the east by the Jews. And we have the Turko-Tartar language peculiar to the Karaites.

As has been mentioned already, the use of that Hebrew alphabet for alien languages is not without piquancy. Because of its constant use, it has come to assume something of a specifically religious value to the Jew. There was no hesitancy in reading prayers and supplications in the synagogue—especially by the women—in any of these languages. Some of the lessons of the prophets to this very day are read in Spanish and some of these are used at the Seder, with the Hagadah, on Passover evening. The Jews abhorred the introduction of the Latin alphabet, which they described as the writing of the Galaḥim—that is, the writing of the Christian clergy. But the Hebrew alphabet, although it served merely as a means for expressing a foreign language, invested such language

with a sort of sacredness—and just because it was written in Hebrew characters.

This familiarity with the language and the literature of other peoples, through the use of the Hebrew alphabet, as has been remarked previously from a cultural and, to a certain extent, from a religious point of view, has had a very far-reaching effect upon the life of the Jews. As most of them migrated into countries of lower civilization than that which flourished in the countries from which they had come, they had nothing to learn from their surroundings. They felt themselves to be superior, for they had brought with them some important elements of intellectual value. And they were satisfied that they could feed on these. But, in that way, they created a kind of spiritual isolation in an island of foreign customs and of foreign tongues, in the midst of nations with whom they had practically nothing in common. Neither the Poles, nor the Russians in the north, nor the Slavonic-Turkish, nor even the Greek nations in the south, nor the Tartar elements in the south of Russia, had anything to offer the Jewish people. On the one hand, the Jews possessed the Bible, and, on the other, they had brought with them from the West a very rich literature which they developed in their new habitation to such an extent as later to invest it with a Jewish spirit. The result was a cutting off from the stream of intellectual developments in the West. They were driven in upon themselves and their own Hebrew scholarship which flourished among them. But they had nothing to offer the masses. Thus they remained intellectually and socially stationary.

It was the culture of the Middle Ages transplanted

to the East and fossilized there. Hence, the tremendous reaction which set in when Mendelssohn first translated the Bible into another German dialect. The use of the literary language of Germany, at the end of the 18th century, impressed them as an act of heresy. They did not realize that it was the same language which they had been using. There was no admixture of Hebrew words in it, therefore the shock was great. It was the first breach in the wall of the Ghetto, made indirectly through the Hebrew alphabet. This time, this same alphabet was the carrier of a literary language by which those who read it were able afterwards to partake of the whole German culture, developed during that period which separates the time of the migration of the Jews to the East from the time of Mendelssohn.

Among the Sephardim of the West, we have another experiment of Latin characters. Many of these Sephardim were Marranos, long weaned from the use of the Hebrew alphabet. They knew and used only the Latin script for the Spanish which they spoke and wrote. When they came to Holland and publicly proclaimed their Judaism—or had gone thither as Jews, completely ignorant of the ancient Hebrew alphabet—the Bible and prayers were translated into Spanish for them. But certain prayers, like the "Kaddish" and the "Shema' "—two prayers of a fundamental character —were transliterated so as to make it possible for the people to recite them in Hebrew while reading them in the original Spanish alphabet. This, however, was only a tentative experiment; yet it has a curious analogy with that earliest one, when Hebrew was transliterated into Greek characters.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Spanish Jews had been using the Latin type for all their prints in the West, in Italy, as well as in Holland and in England, they remained in constant contact with the civilization of the West. It was easily possible, then, for Manasseh ben Israel to correspond with the Queen of Sweden and with Cromwell. And Spinoza had no difficulty in deeply influencing the philosophic mind of the world. That is why the Spanish Jews never experienced the isolation of the Ghetto. The result, however, was that their Hebrew learning and their contribution to the stock of Jewish life had become correspondingly diminished.

It is a curious phenomenon which this use of the Hebrew alphabet presents to us. Indeed, as I have referred to earlier, it is romance with all the glamour of romance to see practically all the great languages of Europe written by the Jews in the primitive alphabet of the old Hebrew script. It is romance that these languages thereby have become invested with something of the same sanctity and reverence as the Hebrew in which the Jews wrote them—the language of the Bible and the language of the prayers.

It is none the less curious to observe how, by using their own alphabet for the writing of other languages the Jews retained a contact with the best intellectual productions of these nations, especially with those of a popular character, which were free from a definite religious bias, and that the Jews were in that way able to replenish their spiritual store from the universal output.

It is interesting, too, to observe that in consequence of this use of the Hebrew alphabet, Jewish woman-

hood also was able to benefit and to enjoy much of the poetic and the popular literature of the nations in whose midst they lived. Yet, as mentioned before, through clinging to this alphabet and using it for foreign languages, the Jews later on isolated themselves from the rest of the world. This, then, created that profound gulf which separated them from the rest of the world at the time when the political emancipation had arrived. They had much to learn and much to unlearn. The worst feature of unlearning was that they had discarded, wholesale, everything of a foreign origin when written in Hebrew letters. In that way, much of the good and much of the gold were thrown away with the dross.

The precipitous change from one alphabet to another, insignificant as this may appear to be on the surface, has had a disastrous effect on the continuity with the past. The abrupt change, without any intervening transitory period, had the effect of breaking it. The bewilderment noticed among those who have come from the East and settled in the West is self-explanatory. If we pause to realize such change of circumstances together with the change of writing which became necessary for their coming in direct contact with the rest of the world, their perplexity cannot be surprising.

VIII

Slowly, imperceptibly, perhaps, but none the less surely, the use of the Hebrew alphabet is being limited to the Hebrew language only—the language to which it belongs—and the Jews elsewhere have taken over the kindred alphabets which have sprung from it in

its more primitive form, and which are now recognized as the general system of writing.

The change which has taken place is a natural and a necessary one. It carries with it, however, a very important lesson in the discussion as to the value of the peculiar non-Hebrew languages to which so much importance is being attached in modern times. Consciously, or unconsciously, the people again are feeling, as they felt in the time of Mendelssohn, that the adoption of a new alphabet means much more than a mere change of words—that it means, in fact, a complete transformation of the inner life of the Jews. They are feeling, too, that the abandonment of the Hebrew alphabet for the writing of Yiddish (the German dialect spoken by the Jews in the North), or Ladino (the Spanish dialect spoken by the Sephardic Jews in the East), may have consequences very much more far-reaching than the mere change of alphabet. Be this as it may, the use of the Hebrew alphabet, nevertheless, while it has been a means of serving the Jewish religious life, has not estranged the Jews from the people in whose midst they have lived for so many centuries, the people whose language and habits they have come to assume.

The use of the Hebrew alphabet has had the effect, too, of strengthening in the Jews a feeling of unity with their old tradition. It was a difference only of language and not of script which had served to separate them from the Bible and the Hebrew literature. But, in this way, as has been stated earlier, it created for itself a kind of spiritual isolation—a barrier, erected between them and the rest, with a spiritual stagnation as the obvious result.

The movement now on foot to go back to the ancient practices of the Greek-speaking Jews and to substitute a Latin alphabet for the Hebrew, should carry with it the warning of the fate which has overtaken those who have transcribed the Hebrew into Greek and Arabic letters. Besides, there are the philological difficulties to be reckoned with, those of finding simple signs corresponding with the real sounds of the Hebrew alphabet.

IX

The wheel of history cannot be turned back. Nor can that peculiar characteristic of the Hebrew alphabet be improved upon—the evolving for each separate sound one single separate sign. No substitution of artificial combinations of signs, no peculiar graphic modifications of the signs, could ever be made to serve the purpose which the Hebrew alphabet so tellingly throughout the ages has served. With the loss of the Hebrew alphabet, much more would be lost than is the case when foreign languages, like German and Spanish, are no longer written in the Hebrew characters. With the loss of the Hebrew alphabet, moreover, the very Hebrew Bible itself, the greatest treasure the world possesses—that priceless treasure of all mankind, of which the Jews hitherto have been faithful custodians—would be lost. It is for the Jews, then, to see to the continued preservation, with all its romance, of the Hebrew Alphabet.

II

FAITH AND SCIENCE

BY

MOSES LEGIS ISAACS

II

FAITH AND SCIENCE

The popularization of science has given rise to a conflict, in the minds of many people, between science and religion. There is a tendency to contrast scientific knowledge, gathered with precise instruments by trained men, on the one hand, with the mass of complex beliefs, dogmas and traditions which are termed religion, on the other. Science, for example, pictures man as a product of the action of forces and time on a simple form of life. Religion teaches that man holds a special place in the universe and that he has certain responsibilities towards his Creator. In support of the scientific theory there are museums full of bones and plaster of Paris, while for the religious belief we can but call upon that almost undefinable thing called traditional faith.

That religion is often worsted in the struggle is common knowledge, for there seem to be ever increasing numbers of ardent atheists. One individual has capitulated to such an extent that he calls for a new religion based on modern physics and chemistry. Whole denominations have changed. In some cases they have become social societies, although retaining their old names, and their places of prayer have been turned into forums for the discussion of everything save religion. The accounts of sermons in the newspapers on Sunday and Monday report such interesting

topics as appeals for better transit facilities or appraisals of modern art. In other cases there is a more or less definite attempt to divert the focus of attention from the more fundamental phases of religion to ethics and morals. The leaders of one faith have gone to the extent of creating new morals and have made the total abstinence from alcohol the *sine qua non* of spirituality.

That the present curious situation exists is due in part, at least, to the deep-rooted belief of the average person that he is capable of making an unerring decision when presented with two sets of facts, irrespective of whether they are scientific or legal. He feels that he already knows the facts of religious belief, and that scientific data are to be gathered from accounts in texts or from lectures. He often feels that the case is one-sided indeed.

In forming his judgment, such a person may be cognizant of the scientific facts in a given case, but he is unfortunately completely ignorant of the fundamentals of science and of scientific methods. It is hardly to be expected that he should not be, for the books on the fundamentals of science make difficult reading and even in colleges, courses on the subject are very rare. Many teachers of science, although considered authorities in their own fields and masters of detail and theory, are yet quite ignorant of the fundamental principles of science and of its limitations.

The understanding of the more basic principles, although not interfering with a practical appreciation or use of science, is, however, necessary in order to let us know how far we may be justified in using scientific knowledge as a standard for judging religion. In what

follows we shall present a primer of science, discussing scientific methods, interpretations of scientific results and their limitations. The reader will then be in a position to judge for himself the extent to which reliance on scientific theory is warranted.

A Science Primer

Most people believe the scientist to be a peculiar person. In the affairs of every-day life they know him to be simple and often absent-minded. In the laboratory, however, they picture him as rounding up facts with a discernment so keen that error is impossible. There are, of course, failures and disappointments, but these are always temporary and in the end the facts and theories emerge as unalterable truth. The medieval alchemists and astrologers might well have envied this reverence of the modern layman. The latter has only the vaguest notions of how facts are obtained or theories formulated. He fully appreciates that he would be helpless if called on to produce one or the other. He knows that science involves a mass of intricate apparatus and bewildering mathematical formulæ. These he leaves to the scientist. The average man, however, is keenly interested in the final results, and while he cheerfully confesses ignorance as to methods, he considers himself a good judge of the rest. We hear him say, "Science has proved beyond a doubt that—," or "That idea has been completely overthrown by science."

The truth of the matter is that the scientist is an ordinary human being, not alone with his family, but in his laboratory as well. There are operative, in both places, the same prejudices, the same reverence for

authority, the same intuitive reasonings. If the scientist rises superior to his fellow-man, the power of the imagination is responsible for it. Indeed, a direct proportion seems to exist between the greatness of a scientist and the boldness of his imagination. It is unfortunate that both the scientist and the layman often forget that imagination plays such an important part in scientific research.

For gaining impressions and ascertaining truths, the worker in science has the very same five senses with which his fellow-men are equipped. The fact is obscured, perhaps, by the microscopes, the telescopes, and the colorimeters that he uses. But, in the end, it is the human eye which sees the results. We know that our senses often are too blunt to detect certain changes and that we are often deceived by illusions, but what we do not realize is that the scientist is subject to the same pitfalls.

Not infrequently several workers who have carried out what appeared to be identical experiments have reported very different results. As an illustration, we may cite the controversy about the presence of iodine in the body. Some, after performing a certain test, saw a blue color and concluded that iodine was a constant constituent of our make-up; others, detecting no blue color, maintained that it was not. Today, we consider that iodine, although occurring in very small quantities in our bodies, is an essential constituent. Without it, there occur the most extraordinary changes such as are found in cretins.

As a corollary to the statement that our senses are limited in the accuracy of their function, we might add that any force which cannot be made to appeal to our

senses, either directly or indirectly, does not exist for the scientist. Thus we have no sense of electricity; it is only when there is lightning, or when a bell rings or a motor turns that we know of its existence. Putting ourselves back just a few years, what scientist would have admitted the possibility of the disintegration of radium or uranium? It was only when a photographic plate was darkened, or, in other words, it was not until part of the tremendous amount of energy given off by these elements was transformed into a visible phenomenon, that it was recognized. We need but mention radio waves as another example. Very recently a noted physicist discovered a new type of ray of a most penetrating sort, which seems to come from the spaces between the stars. The only way at present of recognizing the radiation is by means of the electroscope, an instrument in which the waves cause a visible movement of a piece of gold foil. Without such an apparatus we would have no direct evidence of their existence and any effects which they would produce in nature would be ascribed to other causes.

We have seen that our senses are limited both qualitatively and quantitatively. In addition there are more subtle limitations, such as the effect of emotion or prejudice or the reverence for authority. A certain English scientist, writing on the evolution of man, furnishes an interesting illustration of our point. He casts about through several pages for a criterion for judging the extent to which the various races have "evolved." Lack of hair on the body suggests itself for the moment but immediately must be discarded because it leads to the preposterous conclusion that the black races are the least primitive. The happy thought strikes the

author that blondness must be the proper yard-stick, and behold all of the "facts" of Nordic superiority are immediately correlated. It is indeed amusing how this particular author has quite unconsciously allowed a purely social bias to guide his scientific conclusions.

Another example which illustrates, on a larger scale, certain of the human failings of the scientist, concerns the present cure for rickets—cod-liver oil. This oil had been used by the Norwegians, and by the family physician, since time out of mind as a cure for rickets. Some fifteen years ago some one subjected a sample of it to chemical analysis and concluded that it contained nothing which was not contained in other edible oils. The obvious conclusion was that olive oil should be just as efficacious as cod-liver oil. Experiments in feeding with the two oils were carried out by many workers and the results, which were summarized in a leading textbook of pharmacology (Cushny, edition of 1915, page 682) were as follows: "On the whole, cod-liver oil has not been shown to have any action apart from that of an easily digested food, and its superiority to some other fats has not been satisfactorily established."

"That settles the matter," the reader will conclude. "Experiment has established the facts and we now have the truth. No one need trouble himself with the matter again." But shortly after 1915 vitamines began to arouse interest. These are present in certain foods and in quantities so small that they all but defy chemical analysis. Cod-liver oil was again examined and was found, by tests on animals, to be very rich in the anti-rachitic principle. Let us quote from the 1924 edition of the same pharmacological text, page 508: "Previously, various theories of its (cod-liver oil's)

action were suggested and many substitutes were devised and made from vegetable oils, but the vegetables were almost devoid of vitamine A, and these substitutes were valueless (in curing rickets)." Obviously, such a conclusion must be based on experiments quite similar to those which established the facts in 1915. In later work, however, the observers of facts knew that such things as vitamines existed. None of the observers in 1915 or in 1924 was by any means dishonest. Their observations were affected, quite unknown to them, by their preconceived notions and prejudices. Other examples could be cited, but the above should suffice to develop our point.

Until quite recently it was assumed by the general public that the decision of the United States Supreme Court was very similar to the conclusion of a scientist. The judges were pictured by most people as being automatons, into whom the questions of law were fed and from whom were handed down the true meaning of the law. That this notion is now changing is evidenced by the opposition to the appointment of Chief Justice Hughes, and at the present writing, to Judge Parker. Both were attacked as being ultra-conservative, the inference being that their decisions would differ materially from those of a progressive or liberal. In other words, it is being realized that the psychological make-up of the judge has much to do with the way in which he views facts. Such a change on the part of the public mind will come eventually in regard to the scientist.

The most basic assumption which the scientist makes is that all results have definite causes, and that given the same causes the same results always follow. Ex-

periment would be useless were this not found to be true. If we superimpose on this belief the additional one that, given the causes and effects of physics and chemistry, we have all that is needed to account for all the phenomena in the world today, we have what is known as the mechanistic viewpoint or conception of the universe. In other words, no Creator is considered necessary. The average man, and for that matter, many workers in science have misunderstood completely the real meaning of the mechanistic viewpoint. There is not in it a particle of proof that it carries the true explanation; nor is there any evidence in it that God does not exist, nor that He does not exert an influence on earth to-day. The mechanistic viewpoint does not explain the beginning of things. The best idea of it may be obtained if we say that it constitutes the "rules of the game" of science. In our opinion, the great scientist, who remarked that when his laboratory was open his oratory was shut, meant that in the laboratory he used the mechanistic viewpoint, not because he had been inwardly convinced of its truth, but because it formed a convenient working basis for experimentation.

If we turn from the scientist to his subject, science, we find the common notion to be that its purposes are to discover truth by the following processes:

1. Gathering facts by observation.
2. Classifying these according to some criterion (not always recognized as arbitrary).
3. Generalizing.
4. Theorizing as to the "how" and "why."
5. Testing theories by experiment.

Some fields of study which are included among the

sciences cannot employ the fifth method. It is obvious that we cannot experiment, for example, in certain branches of zoölogy or in sociology or anthropology. In some cases the "discovery of truth" consists merely of giving phenomena, or objects, long and complicated names.

It must be obvious that there is no place in this scheme for any action which takes place but once. One of the most fundamental laws which we know is that heat never travels from a colder to a warmer body. Every observation that any one has ever made on this earth has confirmed the law. Yet, when the sun was made, there must have been an accumulation of energy into the body of the sun itself, and this must have come either directly or indirectly from areas of lower potential. If we define a miracle as an action which occurs but once, or as an action which involves an unusual play of a force, then the creation of the sun was a miracle. There are many other instances of occurrences which must have been contrary to our known natural laws of today. Their study does not lie in the field of science for they are not amenable to controlled observation, experiment or even classification.

If we examine more carefully into the significance of experiment, we can better form an opinion as to the workings of science as a whole. Let us suppose that we live in the days just after those of Fahrenheit and Celsius. Suppose we begin to study such a simple thing as the boiling point of water. We would have been told that water boils at 212 degrees on Fahrenheit's scale. On testing this statement repeatedly, using pure water, we would soon find that the boiling

point varied, sometimes being higher, and sometimes lower, than the figure of Fahrenheit. (We shall assume that our work will be free from errors of reading.) On investigation of all causes which suggest themselves, we probably should find that the atmospheric pressure was the cause of the variation. With this relationship established (if we follow the steps of most scientists), we would be quite satisfied that we had solved the whole problem and we would even use the boiling point of water as a means of determining the barometric pressure. Our information of the moment often seems ample for explaining all of the necessary facts.

If others had tried to repeat our results they would have discovered, sooner or later, that we had not taken care of all conditions. Some one would have found that dissolved salts raise the boiling point, and others again, with more careful methods, would have observed that the material and nature of the vessel in which the water is boiled affect the results to a considerable degree. Scientific knowledge always is accumulated very slowly, and most usually, by chance observations. Thus, probably, only many years after our work, the scientist would be entitled to feel fairly certain that he could predict the boiling point of a given sample of water if he (1) knew the surrounding pressure, (2) used water containing a known concentration of dissolved matter, and (3) used a certain type of vessel.

Let us consider the case where the only information available is that a given sample of water boiled, let us say, at 213 degrees. In the days of our imaginary early work we probably should have answered at once

that the pressure must have been different. But it is quite obvious that in reality, any of three causes, which experiment showed to be possible, might have been operative. If the sample were still preserved, and if we knew just how the test had been carried out, we probably could perform it again, this time watching carefully the external conditions.

In considering the boiling point of water we have dealt with an extremely simple case. In most work, especially in the experimental biological sciences, there are often many conditions involved in the performance of an experiment, some of which can never be determined or controlled. The result is that there is much conflict in the results obtained.

In some cases very careful workers have fallen into grave error in thinking that they have taken care of all variable factors. Thus, the great Pasteur proved to himself, and to practically the whole scientific world, the impossibility of spontaneous generation by showing that a liquid, which ordinarily would become turbid with bacterial growth, would remain sterile if it were boiled and the container kept stoppered. He reasoned that the first liquid contained contaminating germs and that when these were killed by boiling, none, thereafter, was formed spontaneously. Even a beginner in the subject of bacteriology today knows that boiling a liquid changes its properties considerably, and that any delicate substances which might have given rise to living forms certainly would be destroyed by boiling. In general, we may conclude that the conditions under which any experiment or phenomenon takes place are very important; that they are known with certainty in relatively few cases; and that it is possible that in

setting our conditions—due to the lack of scientific knowledge at the time we perform our experiment—we may overlook totally, some less clear, and more subtle, factor.

The significance of what we have said in the paragraphs just preceding becomes clear at once when we consider an experiment or act which had been performed in nature some time in the past and the remains or results of which are discovered today. To take a definite example: A Dutchman, named Dubois, discovered in Java a piece of a skull, a piece of thigh bone, and some teeth, and hypothesized the race of the *Pithecanthropus erectus*. We shall overlook the fact that he has permitted few except himself to work on his finds, and the fact that the announcement of the discovery of the thigh bone followed a long time after the original communication about the skull top. We shall accept his findings, as have all biologists, as genuine. The skull top suggested that the entire skull was probably unlike that of our modern, normal human skull; nor was it like the skulls of the modern apes. We know nothing about the conditions under which the animal lived and nothing of the conditions under which it died. The accounts tell us that the skull was found among the abundant remains of mammals, a fact which obscures the conditions still more. We are unable to reenact the scene and thus possibly to find by elimination what conditions existed, as we could in the case of the boiling point of water. Anything that is said beyond the statements which we have given about the *Pithecanthropus erectus* is pure conjecture. And much, indeed, has been said.

To make our point clearer, let us take a fact which

today is known in its proper perspective, and let us imagine how a scientist five thousand years hence will treat it, assuming, of course, that he will use the same methods as are used today. As an example, let us take that human freak named Zip, who, as the reader will recall, was one of Barnum's favorites. Zip, although human in body, was almost totally devoid of forehead. Zip died recently and while we are not certain what became of his remains it is probable that they have been most carefully preserved by a museum. In five thousand years, when our remains will be represented by little more than dust, those of Zip might well be the only ones to remain. Some naturalist at that time might easily picture us as a race of Zipians and credit us with whatever lack of qualities such a shape of head will then imply. We merely mention this as a possibility. Absurd though this illustration seems, it is without doubt paralleled very closely in much that is published at the present day on the subject of primitive man.

To return to the science of today, it would be possible to give many examples from various fields of research where the lack of knowledge of the conditions under which an act took place some time in the past, makes interpretation impossible. Yet in these cases, the imagination of the scientist has supplied a description which has the one advantage, at least, of sounding logical. There may be, of course, the widest difference between the logical explanation and the true one. It would be possible to give many examples of how, in the application of science to religion, the mere existence of some similar customs has been taken as evidence of their relationship or the derivation of one

from the other. We need not go into any of these; for the reader, it is hoped, can see the application of our reasoning which we developed above.

There are two recent incidents which deserve mention. The first concerns the discovery in Nebraska of a tooth which seemed to strike a remarkable average between that of ape and man. The original possessor of the tooth was immediately described as one of a race of near-men, who roamed our western plains years ago. To designate him more easily he was termed the *Hesperopithecus haroldcookii.* The tooth was subjected to innumerable tests by experts who would not be easily misled. Their conclusions seemed so clear-cut that the statement was made that all the possible objections had been investigated and answered beyond doubt. When the site at which the tooth had been found was excavated more carefully a jawbone of a wild pig was found which contained teeth differing in no way from the tooth which had been diagnosed so conclusively. Many individuals and newspapers poked fun at the scientists for their error, although such ridicule was undeserved. Before the discovery of the jaw, the scientific conclusions pointed to a certain theory which seemed justified. That further results did not bear out the theory did not detract from the standing of the scientists, but it did embarrass those who used the earlier discovery as an argument against the religious belief of man's special origin.

The second incident which is of interest here is the change of Professor Osborn's theory as to the origin of man. (For full details the reader is referred to *Science* of January 3, 1930.) We are not interested in the fact that it supposed man to have been fairly

civilized at the time when the previous theory pictured him as just branching off from an ape-like type. Nor are we interested in the feeling of satisfaction which has been felt by some of the fundamentalists in seeing a theory come closer to their own beliefs. The point of significance for us lies in the fact that the theory has changed, and changed to a very considerable degree. There is further interest in the fact that evidence for the first theory which was held to be almost incontrovertible is now considered by Professor Osborn to be worthy of little attention. Facts and theories constantly change. Tomorrow what will the theory be?

Faith and Science

When we consider the sum total of the limitations of science—the imperfections in the scientists, both mental and physical, the pitfalls which lie in the way of experiment, and the utter uncertainty which envelops those facts which are beyond the reach of experiment —it is indeed a wonder that any one can look to science as an ultimate test of religious beliefs and doctrines, or as final arbiter or guide of faith. Scientific fact surely cannot be taken as the equivalent of absolute truth. To use science as a test for religion is very similar to an attempt to measure distance with an ever-changing, arbitrary yardstick.

We fail to understand how some Jews continually can discard this or that Jewish custom or ceremony on the ground that it is contrary to the facts of science. Nor can we comprehend the action of the Anglican scholars in publishing a work, as recently reported in the New York *Times* (November 29, 1928), which contains such statements as "Methuselah's longevity was

physically incompatible with the structure of the human body," or that "We know that the beginnings of mankind reach to an immeasurably earlier period than Genesis indicates." As proof of the first statement they evidently would cite the fact that in no known case in *our* day has any one lived so long. If we were to use similar reasoning we should conclude that the sun does not exist, since its formation would involve a process totally incompatible with our present-day experience. The last quotation of the English author is obviously the equivalent of one of those "Science has proved—" statements.[1]

The statements of a certain sociologist given in an address before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and widely quoted in the newspapers of December 30, 1928, are even more difficult of comprehension. The speaker was reported as saying that a newer concept of God was needed and that (quoting from the New York *Times*):

> This newer view of God must be formulated in the light of contemporary astrophysics, which completely repudiates the theological and cosmological outlook of Holy Scripture.
>
> What we need, if a notion of God is needed, is such a conception of God as Dr. Fosdick might work out in the light of the astrophysical discoveries and conceptions of Shapley and Michelson and the study of atoms and electrons by Bohr, Planck, and Millikan.

[1] In the New York *Times* of December 31, 1928, quotations from a speech given by a well-known physician state that old age is a disease, and that, with control and preventive measures, there is no reason why life cannot be prolonged almost indefinitely. Will the scholars mentioned above, in the light of this new authoritative statement, change their decision as to the credence to be placed in the story of Methusaleh?

> The psychoanalysts have already shown that the "sense of sin" is but a psychophysical attribute of adolescent sentimental development.
>
> If the Ten Commandments are to be obeyed today it should be only when their precepts and advice can be proved to square with the best natural and social science of the present time. They must be subjected to the same scientific scrutiny as that to which we would submit the cosmology of Genesis or the medical views of Leviticus.

There are doubtless many people who readily will accept the statements just given and conclude that only that which can withstand scientific analysis is worthy of observance. To those who understand the real nature of science, and especially to those who understand how humorous is such dogmatism on the part of the sociologist, the speech must appear in its true light—a speech for Buncombe.

It is to be hoped that the reader will now be in possession of a critique of science, not in any sense derogatory or deprecatory, but one which recognizes it as a search for knowledge with absolute truth as a goal perhaps never attained. For, even when attained, the scientist has no one to tell him that his search is ended. The next day may bring out new unthought-of discoveries which overthrow those things which seemed most certain on the day before. Science, then, being relative, cannot serve as a standard by which to choose or discard what tradition and faith have taught us. With such a point of view the conflict of science and religion does not exist.

III

FUNDAMENTAL IDEALS AND PROCLAMATIONS OF JUDAISM

BY

J. H. HERTZ

III

FUNDAMENTAL IDEALS AND PROCLAMATIONS OF JUDAISM

The study of comparative religion, especially in the narrow sphere of the different religious phases in the Western World, has one obvious danger. It not infrequently leaves in the minds of weaker brethren the impression that fundamentally all faiths have much the same goal; that they exact much the same ethical practice from their devotees; and that, in consequence, there is not much choice as between the various religions. It is, therefore, well to recall the words quoted approvingly by William James, the American psychologist:

> "There is mighty little difference between one man and another, but what little difference there is is mighty important."

Even if we were to grant that there is mighty little difference between one religion and another, we must not overlook the fact that it is these differences that constitute the individuality of each religion. Furthermore, these differences among the religions are of such transcendent importance that millions have been, and are, willing to agonize and to die for them. It is to such differentiæ of Judaism—the special emphasis and accent in the promulgation of its message concerning the great problems and duties of life, the unique

perspective in which it views them—to which the following observations will be devoted.

I deem it necessary to preface a few words in regard to the term "Judaism" in the cumbrous title of my paper, "Fundamental Ideals and Proclamations of Judaism."

"Judaism" is a more comprehensive term than "Jewish Religion." Judaism cannot be reduced to a few theological or metaphysical principles, because it is the sum total of all the manifestations of the distinctively Jewish spirit. It is far more than a creed or a theology; it is greater than a denomination or a Church. Judaism is a *religious civilization* with its own language, its own literature, its own history, its own customs, and its own social institutions. Rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures—the inheritance of a distinct people as the depository and guardian of the truths held by it for mankind, nurtured by the instruction of God-enlightened prophets and seers, sages and saints, upheld by the teachings of self-denying ages—this Jewish civilization, aglow with a passion for righteousness, has resisted all tyrannies, overthrown all idols, and turned the course of history. Its story has chapters in every country on earth, and it bears the impress of every culture. This civilization has taken freely from others, though it has given immeasurably more than it has taken. It is a libelous fallacy always to represent Jews as intellectual borrowers. Jews have done some substantial lending, as well. Thus, Israel has taught mankind to conceive of moral laws as religious laws, in itself the most far-reaching step in the upward march of men and nations; and far from becoming stagnant or running dry 1900 years ago, Judaism,

the mother of religions, has ever remained "a river of God full of living waters." In this Jewish civilization lie enshrined elemental, original spiritual forces which to this day have lost none of their effectiveness. Now, what are a few of the fundamental proclamations and ideals of this religious civilization?

I

The first affirmation of Judaism is the *Unity of God.* The belief in One God, who is an eternal Being, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loving-kindness and truth; keeping mercy unto the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. This sublime conviction is the quintessential embodiment of Israel's contributions to the everlasting truths of religion. Polytheism broke the moral unity of man; it gave religious sanction to the foulest practices. Monotheism alone is, for the individual, the basis of undivided moral allegiance to a God of justice and mercy. For the nations, it is the proclamation of Human Brotherhood, since the One God must be the God of the whole of humanity. Israel's recognition of the Unity of God goes back to the cradle of the Hebrew people; and yet it is as new as the ripest thought of our own day. Modern science is monistic. Every new discovery more firmly establishes the fact that there is a unity of all creative forces in the Universe; that in all Nature's infinite variety there is one single Principle at work; that the cosmos has been planned and is controlled by One Power—*the* Power of no beginning and no end, which has existed before all things were formed and will remain after all things will have gone.

It was because of the merit of the Pharisees that the fullness of that sacred truth of the Unity of God saturated the souls of the lowliest as well as the highest in Israel. They invested the words, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One"—the *Shema'*—with the importance of a confession of faith. It was due to them that these words became the first prayer of innocent childhood, the last utterance of the dying, the rallying cry by which a hundred generations in Israel were welded together into one Brotherhood that remained unmoved and undazzled by the triumphant world-power of the dominant faiths; uncowed by Inquisitions and undaunted

> By the torture prolonged from age to age,
> By the infamy, Israel's heritage,
> By the Ghetto's plague, by the garb's disgrace,
> By the branding tool, by the bloody whip,
> And the summons to Christian fellowship.

The rabbis, furthermore, defended the Jewish God-idea whenever its purity was threatened by enemies from without or within. They permitted no toying with polytheism, even in its most ethereal disguise; no departure, even by a hair's breadth, from absolute monotheism. In legends and similitudes, in parables and polemical discourses, they showed forth the folly, the futility, of idol-worship, the infamy of the moral degradation evidenced by the heathen deification of the reigning emperor. Thanks to the teaching of the Pharisees, the Jews alone, in the world-wide Roman Empire, refused the erection of statues and the paying of divine honors to Caligula. While all the other peo-

ples slavishly obeyed the decree of the Imperial madman, *they saved the honor of the human race.*

The long and arduous warfare, begun by the prophets and continued by the rabbis, is not yet ended. The Unity of God has its antagonists in the present age, even as it had in former ages. In order to belittle Israel's infinite glory as the prophet of monotheism, anti-Semitic writers on religion speak of the Unity of God as a bare, barren, arithmetical idea; as merely "the minimum of religion." Some of them contrast the bountiful abundance displayed by Greece in its hundreds of gods and goddesses, by India in its thousands of fantastic deities, with the one God of Israel. *"Only* one God—how mean, how meager!" they exclaim. But Truth is on the march; and the number of those Christian theologians is growing who recognize that, in the words of Hermann Gunkel, "the Shema' (Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One) is the foundation of all higher, ethical, spiritual religion—an imperishable pronouncement, reverberating to this day in every idealistic conception of the Universe."

We may well grant that even without the aid of the prophets and the Pharisees, polytheism might have made way for the recognition of the one only God. Towards the beginning of the Christian era, the population of the Roman Empire was prepared to embrace monotheism. But, as Kuenen reminds us, the one God of heathenism was quite another from that of Israel. He was not, like the latter, ethical to the very core; he was *not* a God of holiness, of righteousness, of mercy. Moreover, this one God of holiness, of righteousness, and of mercy, whom the teachers of Judaism proclaimed, was a living God, the Ruler of

all the earth who can, and will, do right, who judgeth the world in righteousness and the peoples in equity. Ethical monotheism is Messianic. Righteousness, it proclaims, is a cosmic force; and, consequently, what ought to be, must be and will be. Mutual slaughter is not a human way of settling international differences; therefore, the preachers of ethical monotheism in Jerusalem of old said that the time must come when the nations shall learn war no more, when they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and conscience and right will be the judge between the peoples. "The League of Nations," said General Smuts, "is first of all the vision of a great Jew almost 3,000 years ago—the Prophet Isaiah."

This cardinal Jewish dogma of a living God who rules history, has changed the heart and the whole outlook of humanity. Not only the hallowing of human life, but the hallowing of history, flows from the doctrine of a Holy God, hallowed by righteousness. And it is only the Jew, and those who have adopted Israel's Scriptures as their own, who, from the beginning even to everlasting, see God's world as one magnificent unity, and who look forward to that ultimate triumph of justice in humanity on earth which men call the Kingdom of God. Even as it is only the Jew, and those who have gone to school to the Jew, who can pray, "Thy Kingdom come."

Edwyn Bevan, in *The Nation,* 29th April, 1922, writes:

> The European shows the contrast he does to-day in the matter of religion to the Indian, because Europe, at a particular moment of history, accepted the God of Israel. Greek philosophy, like Indian, saw the world-

process as an endless recurrence leading nowhither. The antithesis to all this is the Hebraic view of God and the world. It is essentially Hebraic to pray, "Thy kingdom come." The gap between the earth as it is and the ideal, which the Hebrew feels so painful, the Indian takes as a matter of course. The Hebrew desires to see the gap closed by the two being pulled together; the Indian desires to leave the earth, as a hopeless business, behind him, and escape from the wheel.

II

The second fundamental conception of Judaism is *Morality as Law.* It proclaims the divine origin of the Moral Law; that there is an everlasting distinction between right and wrong, an absolute "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" in human life, a categorical imperative in religion—high above the promptings of passion, of the peradventure of inclination, or the fashion of the hour. God is not only our Father; He is also our Lawgiver. And, in the Covenant at Sinai, He has made known to the children of men the foundations on which alone human welfare can be built.

The Ten Commandments proved mighty sledge-hammers of the spirit before which the heathendom of antiquity gradually crumbled to dust. In the modern world also, their work, in the divine education of the race and the spiritual emancipation of man, is not at an end. "Mankind needs light, and the Jew is a great torch-bearer." Such is a recent pronouncement of the Federal Council of the Evangelical Churches of America. And the light which mankind most sorely needs today is the reaffirmation of Moral Law. This need long antedates the Great War.

It was the nineteenth century which discovered that we came from the beast; and ever since that discovery, many of the literary and artistic leaders of the century, and a portion of its directing classes, took it upon themselves to convince us that it was only natural for us to return to the beast. A new and powerful Paganism began its assault against the ancient organized Morality. It dethroned God in the sphere of human conduct; derided all moral inhibitions, and declared instinct and inclination to be the truest guides to human happiness. The twentieth century is continuing the instruction begun in the nineteenth. A new ethic has arisen, as subversive as it is godless, which bids each man, woman, or child do that which seems right in his, or her, own eyes. It teaches that *all* moral laws are man-made, and therefore, that all can be unmade by man. In consequence, on every side, there is a questioning of the sacredness of human life, a scoffing at the holiness of purity, an angry repudiation of the idea of property.

In some lands this has led to social upheavals, resulting in immemorial human institutions being torn up by the roots. Even in English-speaking countries there is to-day an impatience with moral authority. In fiction, on the stage, in everyday life things are tolerated, extenuated, nay encouraged, that only a generation ago would have met with unqualified condemnation. The pilot's stars of moral guidance seem no longer to be fixed stars and, for many voyagers over the ocean of life, the clouded heavens offer no guidance at all. Ethically, people seem to be groping as in a thick fog. "Moral, immoral: which is which?" they ask. "Why should I?" is a question often accompanied

by a subtler "Why shouldn't I?" In other words, they deny or, at any rate, doubt the reality of moral distinctions. Their position has been admirably summed up, long before their day, in the words of David Hume, who is reported to have said: "If I were to travel from one end of the earth to the other, determined to give a good dinner to the good man and a good drubbing to the wicked man, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred I should not know which to give which, and whether either deserved either."

Contrast this with Isaiah's, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes!"

By his proclamation of the Moral Law, the Jew stands unswervingly. And others, likewise, cannot emerge from spiritual confusion unless they share Israel's belief in the reality and the sacredness of that Law. *The Times Literary Supplement*, 12th August, 1926, writes:

> The old type of piety amongst the English-speaking peoples drew its character very largely from the Old Testament. In the present mood of the world, the idea of man subjecting himself in his personal life to a divine law outside him or above him, has become repugnant to large numbers of men and women. To those who think straight, it must be plain that to deprive Christianity of the elements which it carried on from the Old-Testament tradition, would be to leave nothing which could be called Christianity at all.

This whole conception of Morality as Law is, of course, of basic importance in the realm of education.

Without it, it is difficult to see how education can produce moral strength, self-control, and character—in the absence of which all talk of education is but sound and smoke, signifying nothing. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." This is the foundation of all education. All the wisdom of man, Judaism maintains, is sheer and utter vanity unless it is accompanied by reverent submission of the will in the service of higher things. No wonder, therefore, that the child was taught to look upon life as a discipline demanding unconditional obedience to divine "Thou shalts" and "Thou shalt nots" and involving a constant sacrifice of selfish inclination for the sake of principle. In such subjection of the personal life to a Divine Law lies the road of educational salvation out of the moral chaos in our own age. Only by inculcating in the souls of the young, loyal obedience to laws that are absolute and unchangeable, can we hope to stem the waters of animalism and heathenism that today threaten the higher life of man.

III

We shall never get to the heart of Judaism as a rule of life, nor shall we begin to understand its distinctive individuality as a religious civilization unless, and until, we have grasped the great Jewish ethical principle of the *Holiness of Home*. Before we can do so, however, we must glance at presuppositions, in the Jewish ethos, which alone render that Holiness of Home possible. One of these is the centrality of the child in Judaism.

Among the most enlightened nations of antiquity the child had no rights, no protection, no dignity, of any sort. In Greece, weak children were generally

exposed; that is, abandoned on a lonely mountain to perish. And public opinion demanded that deformed children be drowned, or otherwise put out of the way. In Roman times, a man, at will, could put even a grown-up son to death. The respect which Jews showed for infant life and their horror at any form of child-murder were noted as a contemptible prejudice of a perverse people. The Roman historian Tacitus, in describing the population of Judæa, says:

> All their customs owe their strength to their very badness. . . . The Jews do not allow any images of the Deity to stand in their Temples . . . and it is a crime among them to kill any child (Nécare quemquam ex agnatis nefas putant).

Only six Latin words: yet what a lurid flashlight do they throw on Græco-Roman society! It is in such a society that the rabbis proclaimed the Biblical view that the child was the highest of human treasures. They declared little children to be the Messiahs of mankind; that is—in the child God gives humanity a chance to make good its mistakes. The child is thus the perennial regenerative force in humanity.

It is only during the last century that the world at large learned this Jewish ideal; that Wordsworth and Victor Hugo, Swinburne and Christina Rossetti, discovered that "Heaven lies about us in our infancy." But ever so long before the new humanitarianism made the child the focus of all spiritual and social endeavor, Judaism redeemed it from slavery and death. And Judaism did infinitely more; it consecrated the child. One legend that has sunk deep into the Jewish consciousness will illustrate this.

The Talmud tells that each unborn babe, before it knocks on the gateway of life, has an angel as its tutor; that it is taught the whole Torah, and made familiar with all the truths and mysteries of life and eternity; that it is solemnly adjured to shun the evil, and to follow the right, on its earthly pilgrimage; and that, even if all the world were to combine and acclaim it righteous, the soul is ever to bear in mind that it cannot attain, on earth, to the sinlessness of its Heavenly home. At the moment of birth, however, with one stroke, all is forgotten—the teaching, the oath, the admonition—and naught but an impulse towards the right, a dim reminiscence of the one true way, remains throughout life. You may dismiss all this as a bit of folk-lore; nay, as superstition, if you will. Yet the effect of such a legend was a marvelous enhancement, in the Jewish mind, of veneration for the new-born child who, but a little while ago, it was firmly believed, held converse with Heavenly beings. It necessarily led to life-long efforts to bring out the dormant teaching divinely planted in the child's soul. Education came to be regarded as the most sacred of human activities; the schoolhouse as a second Mount Sinai; and the day on which the child entered it, as the Festival of Revelation, when the Commandments as it were, all anew, proclaimed for him.

The second presupposition of the Jewish ideal of the Holiness of Home is the unchanging sacredness of parental and filial affection in Israel. Judaism enrolls filial respect towards father and mother among its ten holiest Commandments; and it maintains the absolute and *unchanging* character of this fundamental human duty.

This has not always been the case outside Israel. In the Middle Ages, for example, there were occasions when the love of children for parents was branded by the Church as deep sin. Readers of Lecky's *History of European Morals* will remember the unbelievable discredit that was thrown upon the domestic virtues in the times of the Christian ascetics. Such discredit is not unknown in our own days of militarism and super-patriotism. Thus, a generation ago, the ex-Kaiser reminded his soldiers that at his command it would be their duty to shoot down their own fathers and mothers. When furthermore, we consider that defiance of parental authority is declared to be the first step of moral emancipation by political Bolshevism, when we call to mind that leaders of religious Bolshevism speak of a class-war between parents and children, and of the "irrepressible conflict" between fathers and sons, it is clear that Israel must still bear witness to the absolute and unchanging sacredness of parental and filial affection.

One other presupposition of the Holiness of the Home we will consider—the place of woman in Jewish life. Woman, we read on the very first pages of the Bible, is the helpmate of man. Monogamy was the ideal, nay, the rule in Biblical times, polygamy, the exception. "A man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife," says Scripture; not to his *wives*. Note further that it is man who is to cleave to his wife, and not the woman, who is physically the weaker, that is to cleave to her husband; because, in the higher sphere of the soul's life, woman is ethically and spiritually superior to man. "Even as the wife is," say the rabbis, "so the husband is. . . . Be care-

ful not to cause woman to weep," is their admonition, "for God counts her tears."

In such a matter as a nation's estimate of its womanhood, however, little can be proved by quotations that might not be neutralized by counter-quotations. The decisive thing is that the respect and reverence which womanhood enjoyed in Judaism are not limited to noble and beautiful sayings. That respect and reverence were translated into life, whether in ancient, medieval, or in modern times. One test alone is sufficient to show this. That test is wife-beating. In the 12th century, a noted French teacher could declare: "This is a thing not done in Israel." In the following century, a great jurist, martyr, and leader of German Jewry writes: "Jews are not addicted to the custom of beating their wives which is prevalent among the Gentiles." And as for England, no less an historian than George Macaulay Trevelyan, in his recent survey of the history of England, says that as late as the fifteenth century:

> Chivalry was in England, as elsewhere, compatible with brutal violence and calculating materialism, not least in the treatment of women. Wife-beating was a recognized right of man, and was practiced without shame by high as well as low.

There were other things even worse than wife-beating; such as the public sale of wives, which survived as a folk-custom, well into the nineteenth century. Thomas Hardy founded his powerful novel, *The Mayor of Casterbridge,* on such a sale. But enough. Sufficient has been said to indicate that even in the darkest ages Jewish women enjoyed a freedom, a re-

spect, and a reverence surpassed among no other people.

IV

Such are some of the presuppositions of the Holiness of Home in Israel. Now as to that ideal itself. This holiness is rooted in religion, and it springs from the association of certain times and seasons in the Jewish home with ceremonial customs regarded as sacred. A noted folklorist writes:

> It is impossible to describe to those who have not experienced it, the feeling of holy joy which is diffused throughout the humblest Hebrew home by the solemn repetition of acts which in themselves may be regarded as mere customs, without vital connection with the souls of men. Man is made man by history. The Jew recognizes that he is made what he is by the history of his fathers. Many of the customary ceremonials which make up the holiness of the Jewish home are purely history raised into religion.

Now, this web of fast and festival, symbol and ceremony, that centers in the Jewish Home and goes to make up the Jewish Life, has often provoked the derision of heathens—Jewish and non-Jewish. Much depends on our manner of approach towards the Jewish Life. Epictetus, the noblest of the ancient philosophers, tells us: "Everything has two handles; the one by which it can be borne, and the other by which it cannot be borne." Judaism likewise has two handles; the name of one handle is ridicule—the handle by which it cannot be borne. It is far otherwise if we approach the Jewish life in a spirit of *reverence;* if we seek to understand it from within. The spiritual universe of the Jew is the Torah—the Law. But the

Torah is not merely the written text of the Pentateuch; the real Torah is the meaning enshrined in that text as expounded, interpreted, and unfolded in ever-greater fullness by the Congregation of Israel. That authoritative interpretation of the Torah by successive generations of sages and teachers for more than two thousand years—the Oral Law—forms the soul of Judaism, and gives it individuality and uniqueness among the living faiths of men. That Oral Law has been described as:

> A code which left the intellect and the emotions free to speculate and wonder, to produce philosophy and poetry, but which fettered the will, leaving the spirit to transcend the law in love and self-sacrifice, but not to fall below it; so that even those Philistines who for religion—the music of life—had no ear, should at least be kept sane and strong and mechanically moral, centers of happiness to themselves and channels for a finer posterity. They should be kept from playing wrong notes and jarring chords, if they could not give us sonatas and symphonies of their own!

A fair example, because it is the supreme example, of the hallowing of life under the sanctifying influence of the Law, is the Sabbath. That sacred day is the perennial fountain of idealism and regeneration in Israel. More than any other institution has it molded Jewish family life with its virtues of chastity, charity, love, peace—virtues nowhere surpassed, rarely equaled. Amid all the misery and slavery that for so many centuries were the lot of Israel, once a week the home of the humblest Jew was flooded with light. The Sabbath banished care and toil, grief and sorrow. On that day the despised and rejected of men were

emancipated from the oppression, the tribulation and the degradation of this world; they felt themselves princes, members of a great, eternal, holy people. A German Protestant theologian of anti-Semitic tendencies writes:

> Any one who has had the opportunity of knowing in our own day the inner life of Jewish families that observe the Law of the fathers with sincere piety and in all strictness, will have been astonished at the wealth of joyfulness, gratitude and sunshine, undreamt of by the outsider, which the Law animates in the Jewish home. The whole household rejoices on the Sabbath, which they celebrate with rare satisfaction not only as the day of rest, but rather as the day of rejoicing. Jewish prayers term the Sabbath a joy of the soul to him who hallows it; *he* enjoys the abundance of Thy goodness. Such expressions are not mere words; they are the outcome of pure and genuine happiness and enthusiasm.

But the Sabbath could never have become what it was, is, and will be, in the life of the Jewish Jew, were it not for those very rabbinic Sabbath laws, with their infinite minutiæ, which unsympathetic critics decry as so much intolerable formalism. These restrictions justify themselves in that the Jew who actually and strictly obeys these injunctions, and only such a Jew, has a day of rest.

The objection that many of these commands and repressions of the old Judaism, concerning Sabbath, ritual, food, are not in line with modern thought, is not very disturbing. The demand that our religious ideas and practices, in all things shall be in line with modern thought and life, assumes that there exists a consistent body of ideals which can be called Modern

Life, and that it is an advantage to Judaism, or, for that matter, to religion in general, in no way to differ or dissent from this body of thought. But surely we must not naïvely overlook all the "conventional lies of our civilization;" nor must we forget that modern life tends to the destruction of the family, the cheapening of human life, the loss of all belief in absolute values, be they of religion or of morality. Mankind, Judaism holds, does not live in a world of ideas only. Men and women, as we know them, cannot dispense with symbols that give tangibility to ideas; at least, the Jew cannot. And it is quite impossible to overestimate the part played by the symbols, the customs, and the observances of Judaism, in linking the generations in filial piety, in creating that Jewish home which compelled the admiration of a hostile world at a time when Israel was loathed as if he were some toad, "ugly and venomous." The beauty of Israel's home-life forced them reluctantly to admit that:

> "The toad, ugly and venomous,
> Wears yet a precious jewel on its head."

The great duty of modern Israel is to guard that precious jewel of infinite beauty and imperishable worth, to keep it bright and brilliant, so that it continue to illumine the soul of Israel; yea, that it help kindle the same holy light in the soul of all humanity.

V

One more Jewish ideal shall we consider. Judaism has been very chary of definitions of God. He is the *En Sof*, the Infinite, the Undefinable, yea, the Unknowable. "If I could comprehend Him, I should my-

self be divine," is a well-known Hebrew saying. And yet in Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7:

> The Lord, the Lord, God, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; keeping mercy unto the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and acquitting the penitent.

Scripture gives us such a definition of God. Furthermore, all schools of Jewish thought agree that this sublime revelation expresses the essence of the Jewish God-conception, and that it enshrines some of the most distinctive doctrines of Judaism.

One of these distinctive doctrines is the *Imitation of God*. "Holy shall ye be, for holy am I, the Lord your God," is the divine demand of the Law. Israel is not only to serve God, but imitate Him. Mortal man, however, cannot imitate God's infinity, His omnipotence, or His eternity. That side of His nature, which is beyond human comprehension, is also beyond human imitation. But we *can* know His goodness, we can follow His ways of mercy and forgiveness; and man is never nearer to the divine than in his compassionate moments. "Even as I am merciful, be thou merciful; even as I am gracious, be thou gracious," is the rabbinic translation of the great commandment of the Imitation of God. His merciful qualities are, therefore, the only real links between Him and Man.

The *Imitatio Dei,* the imitation of God's merciful qualities, may indeed be said to be the distinguishing characteristic of Jewish civilization. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the supreme duty is to do justice, to love mercy and to walk in humility with thy God; whereas

the unpardonable sin is held to be man's inhumanity to man. A typical commandment of the Torah is: "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt! . . . *love ye, therefore, the stranger.*" Love of the alien is something unknown in ancient times; and there is not a trace of such laws or admonitions in the Code of Hammurabi, with which Bible-critics love to compare the Pentateuchal laws. Huxley, the great rationalist, declared: "There is no code of legislation, ancient or modern, at once so just and so merciful, so tender to the weak and poor, as the Jewish Law."

The prophets of Israel were loyal followers of the Mosaic teaching. They were dumbfounded at human ferocity as at something against nature and reason. Sacrifice and prayer, if unaccompanied by pity, were in their eyes little short of blasphemy. And the Psalmist could boast: "I have been young and now I am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging for bread." Many years ago, a well-known liberal clergyman made the ironic comment on this verse that the experience of the Psalmist must have been extremely limited. He forgot, however, that the Psalmist was thinking of, and moved in, a Jewish universe and that in no Jewish community was the innocent victim of adverse circumstances, or his orphan child, ever allowed to go under without a helping hand being extended to him.

The history of Jewish philanthropy is a difficult subject. It still awaits the great scholar who can do adequate justice to it. In all probability, the hospital is a Jewish contribution to human civilization. And insufficient though be the records that have come down

to us, we are yet enabled to declare that, as in Biblical and Talmudic times, so in the Dark and the Middle Ages, down to, and including, our own day, the Jew's passion for pity, unconfined by any barriers of creed or race, remained unabated. Moreover, charity, as practiced by the Jew, did not degrade. It had in it that religious touch which sanctifies the giver, and that delicacy of feeling which elevates the recipient.

In brief, Judaism holds that whenever we overcome callousness to human misery, whenever human brotherhood moves us to deeds of pity and beneficence, we imitate God, we experience eternity in this life, and enroll our names among the true children of our Father who is in Heaven.

The Talmud relates the story of a man who attained eternity, in one brief hour. But to conclude adequately the mighty responsible task of attempting to impart eternity—an infinity of spiritual truth—in that so short span of time is difficult, nevertheless. Sir Isaac Newton, one of the master-minds of the human race, in summing up his activities of a lifetime, compares all those years of devotion to science, to a diversion on the seashore with a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him. How much less possible, then, is it in one pamphlet to project more than a very few glimpses of that great ocean of spiritual truth—Judaism! For in the words of Ben Sira, twenty-one hundred years ago:

> There is none that hath ever made an end of learning it and there is none that will ever find out all its mysteries. For its wisdom is richer than any sea, and its words deeper than any abyss.

IV

WORSHIP AS A MODE OF STUDY

BY

EDWIN COLLINS

IV

WORSHIP AS A MODE OF STUDY

Introduction

Perhaps the best introduction to this little book (which, I believe, is all the more needed because its message is too much a part of our daily, subconscious life, for any one to consider it worth pointing out to his neighbor) will be to recount the history of my writing it. For the whole idea, I owe a debt of gratitude to that remarkable little book by Professor Nathan Isaacs, "Study as a Mode of Worship" (see *Jewish Library, First Series*), an idea which, once released from its hiding place of being too obvious, began immediately to develop, to grow, and to take definite shape, compelling me to write. Nor, indeed, was it Professor Isaac's book itself that worked the wonder of evoking its converse and, I dare hope, its complement. Just the sight of the title on the cover did all that was needed, in much the same manner as the mere sight of a segment of a circle produces in the mind's eye the perfect whole. I had not read a word inside the cover when, seeing newly illumined that which I had known always, I sketched, in rapid outline, what I intended as a pendant to his picture: a statement of the converse of Professor Isaacs' thesis, intensifying its message, and, by showing the back of the new golden coin he had put in circulation, enhancing its value.

Yes! Study, in truth, is a "Mode of Worship." But, truer even than that truth is it that Worship not only is a mode of study: it is an essential preliminary, an accompaniment, to all study sufficiently "without blemish" to be brought as an offering to God. Nor is this true only of Jewish worship of *Talmud Torah* and of religious studies.

Learning the Language

Does there exist anything beyond that which our bodily senses can touch or see or hear? There does, certainly! Echoing through the ages, comes that answer. The mere fact that we study the Torah and that we worship gives force to that answer. The whole of the Bible, the whole of our sublime literature, the consensus of two thousand years' thought and feeling of all those, throughout the world, who trace their descent, or their ideals, or both back to Abraham, is the Jewish answer. The central thought of all higher art, of all social, of all moral, of all educational endeavor, together with the aims that give them value and make their practice possible, is the answer of all the nations. And, if "the fool hath said in his heart there is no God," even he is not consistent in his folly. Some there are who, even with ears, cannot hear; others there are who, even with eyes, cannot see. But who would think of asking the stone-deaf whether the sounds of music are an illusion? Or who would consider asking the color-blind to differentiate between shades or colors? Prayer, however—worship of any kind—is both an admission by implication and a means of cultivating, and of making more real and articulate, our

consciousness of our own spirits and our knowledge of God.

Descartes' "Cogito ergo sum" ("I think, therefore I am") here might be modified to read: "The soul that is within me prays; therefore, undoubtedly, it exists." The moment, then, that you will have found it possible to pray, to hold some sort of communion with God, you will not need elaborate philosophic arguments to disprove all materialistic assumptions and to prove the existence of God.

To utter God's praise, to ask His blessing and His aid, are necessary steps in the cultivation of those powers of mind and soul by which we come to perceive the beauty and the marvel of God's work. They are necessary steps, moreover, by which we come to understand—if only in figurative or symbolic form—those attributes meant to convey to us something of the meaning of the words: "The Eternal our God." The mere act of prayer teaches those who pray, by implication, most valuable doctrines. It would be exceedingly difficult, indeed, to put the doctrines into words or to teach them by definite statements. But when we repeat the words of the Psalmists, in their supplications to God, we teach ourselves, and all who join us in prayer, those thoughts about Him, which were the thoughts of David and the prophets and which were fostered by their feelings for Him. Sometimes, in parts of our service, these doctrines are more or less definitely stated. But the mere utterance of prayer, more than any statement, is a convincing testimony to them. And besides, if for no other reason than that he is doing something for himself—making practical use of a power that otherwise it might take long to

convince him he possesses—it is more effective, too, in producing an illuminating knowledge and a firm belief in the one who prays.

A practical exercise in coördinating the thoughts, which it is well to have at the beginning of the day, is the order in which our early morning blessings are said, i.e., first: gratitude to God for the wonderful body, with all its functions, that He has given us; the supreme value of physical health, and the fact which it is well to realize at the opening of each day—that, as a preliminary to living well, it is necessary to live. Furthermore, to its lowest functions it sanctifies the body, by thanking God for them—a lesson with moral corollaries of vital significance. Then there is the duty of studying God's *Torah*. His guidance is the revealed Five Books, which treat not only of "Laws," but of concrete examples, and their attendant warnings in the lives of the patriarchs. Affairs of everyday life, then, of the external world, are interrelated also with *Torah*. Next comes thanksgiving for our spiritual life. In this prayer—*elohai, neshamah*—O Lord—the soul which Thou hast given—the worshiper impresses upon himself the fact that he has a spiritual soul, that it has been given him in *trust* by the Creator, who is "the future One" to take it back. He owns the duty of not following it, and says: "My God, the soul that Thou hast given me is pure. Thou it is that hast created it. Thou it is that hast formed it, etc." Unfortunately, the usual translators, by their rendering of, "Thou hast created it, etc.," have ignored Hebrew grammar and the whole religious lesson meant to be taught.

The point is: "*Thou* it is *Who* hast created it."

attah, "Thou hast, etc." *Thou* and none other. The writer of the prayer knew Hebrew; with a very definite purpose he added the pronoun, *Who,* recurring in each line, to emphasize the vital truth that all the qualities and all the destinies of our immortal spirit depend on, and are due to the fact that it was, and it is, the *One* Eternal, *Who* created, *Who* shaped, *Who* breathed it into us, and *Who* guards it within us. The mere repetition of the personal pronoun *attah,* in addition to the grammatical termination, *ta,* is a statement of the reason *why* our souls are pure.

The saying of this prayer with *'Iyun tefillah* ("devotion in prayer") is in itself, by the very simple method of the worshiper teaching himself, a whole chapter of theology. Again, all the thanksgiving blessings, in the early morning service, that follow this prayer are a means (which they would cease to be if consciously used as such) of impressing on one's own soul, and of handing down, from generation to generation, those precious doctrines—accepted by our people in many lands, in many ages, of varied environments, and of varied worldly sympathies—concerning the relation between man and the external world. They attribute to God all the material blessings, as well as all the common things of life which man employs, down to the work of the homely barn-door cock, in waking us up to worship and to joy in the dawn. [This blessing, by the way, is most curiously mistranslated. We praise God, *not* for giving the cock *knowledge,* (*da-at*) "to distinguish" for himself, between day and night, but *intelligence,* (*binah*)[1] "to

[1] בינה differentiating intelligence, *discrimination,* penetration, is from the same root whence comes בין

cause us to distinguish," between day and night: for *lehavḥin* is not an intransitive verb, but a very definitely transitive form of *hiphil baḥan,* to "test" or to "ascertain differences." It should be translated: to "cause (us) to distinguish between."]

The collection of exquisite psalms that follows is well calculated to prepare the mind and the emotions for the *Shema'* and its blessings, and for the *tefillah,* or prayer, properly so called.

Before going on to discuss, in detail, this communal and individual worship, in its aspect of a mode of study, I would stress the fact again that the mere bringing of an offering of worship to God—either in the form of supplication or of praise or of *Talmud Torah,* in itself a mode of worship, is an implicit declaration of the Israelite's relation with his God, and of God's relation with Israel; a declaration all the more impressive and instructive because it is made in actual practice instead of theoretical, if explicit, statement.

But worship—communion with God—either in the form of reciting the service or of private prayer, is talking with God. And talking with God is the kind of exercise for the spirit as is for the intellect and the organs of speech, the talking of one's own, or foreign, language. There is one very remarkable passage in the *Maḥzor*—(the festival prayer-book for the New Year and the Day of Atonement) *Ve-Khol ma-'aminim*—"And all assert the belief that He hearkeneth to SILENT prayer."—(*Laḥash.*) I do not know of another definite statement to this effect. The whole system of private worship, nevertheless, implies a belief in what it states. The difficulty that most people have, not only in realizing, but, too, in con-

ceiving, the reality of the spiritual, must needs be diminished greatly in the case of those who, by "devotion in prayer" *'Iyun tefillah,* accustom themselves to conversing with the Deity. They are learning the language of a world that is not less, but more, real than that which we call reality. And that is the *ontos on,* the only real existence that there is. Compared with this, all phenomena are merely transient clouds temporarily obscuring the sun-clouds in their passing, that reveal to us, for brief moments, something of the exquisite, varicolored beauty of the hidden sun, the pure white light of its naked brilliance into which no human eye dare look.

Every one, I think, who knows anything of language-teaching, will concur that to learn to speak, or to understand, a language, it is unqualifiedly necessary to practice it. There is no other way. To learn to speak a language is to practice speaking it. To understand another people and their psychology, *it is expedient* to study the literature of that people and to become familiar with it. That is the way, too, to come to feel a sympathetic understanding of their thoughts—that which never can be learned as well by any other means. It is only then, moreover, without putting those thoughts into definite words, that an instinctive realization comes of what they mean, and wish to express.

Wer den Dichter will verstehen,
Muss ins Dichters Lande gehen.

"Whosoever wishes to understand a poet, must travel into the land of that poet"—into his thought-land, at

least, if not into the land of his physical environment.

This is one of the reasons why worship is not only a part of *Talmud Torah,* but the necessary condition of its progress and success. The moment one utters prayer—even prays as Hannah did, inaudibly, without uttered words—whether he knows it or not, he is studying the language of the *Spirit,* the language of God, Himself. For this man, ever afterwards, this thing, this *Torah,* is not "too difficult." It is not "up in heaven" that he should say, "Who will go up into heaven and bring it down to me, that I may understand [2] it?" And that I may do it! But, it is very near to him: "in his mouth," and "in his heart." Note the orders of the words, "in thy mouth," first: "in thy heart," afterwards. Through their utterance they are brought home to our hearts, although in our saying of the *Shema'*, we have a different order: "And these words which I am commanding thee this day, *shall have actual being* [3] upon thy heart, and thou shalt teach them by insistent repetition (*Shinnan*) to thy children, and thou shalt speak *in* them (*in* these very words, not *of* them or about them, as it is usually mistranslated) when thou sittest in thy house." Before we attempt to teach the words of *Torah,* either by iteration or reiteration, those words must have an actual being in our hearts. Then, in teaching them, we must use those very words, the words of *Torah.* Thus, as in the *Shema'*, the Love of God must lead up to the words of His guidance, *Torah,* being in our hearts. Then, and not until then, can we speak, and do

[2] *Shema'*, French *entendre*—to "understand," not English—to "hear."

[3] *Haya* is not the auxiliary verb "to be," it means to "exist."

them. They are no longer strange or difficult to us, for they are neither up in heaven, nor in a foreign land across the sea; but they are in our mouths as well as in our hearts.

Our sages teach that before reciting a blessing we must think of the thing concerning which we are going to say it. We must never begin, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, etc.," before we are sure of the last words of that blessing. Otherwise, how are we to appreciate the thing itself, for which we are about to bless God? This from the point of view of worship, too, is right. For how else can the blessing be sincere, unless we realize first what we are thanking God for—and then utter our thanks? Obedience to this precept makes the saying of every blessing a distinct study of some of the works of God and of their blessings in our own lives, of some of the facts in our history and of some of the principles of our religion because of which we bless the Creator. They are, for instance, that series of blessings in the early part of the morning service, "Who hast not made me a heathen;" "Who hast not made me a slave;" "Who stretcheth the earth above the waters;" "Who directeth the steps of man;" "Who openeth the eyes of the blind;" "Who clotheth the naked;" "Who releaseth the prisoners;" "Who girdeth Israel with strength;" "Who crowneth Israel with glory" (better, "glorious beauty"); "Who giveth strength to the weary;" "Who removeth sleep from mine eyes, and slumber from mine eyelids;" followed by the supplication that God may help us to walk in accordance with His law, and give us favor in His sight, and in the sight of mankind.

Now each of these blessings necessitates the intelligent appreciation of those incidents of actual interest in the daily lives of every one of us. Many of these are symbolized by actions we perform in beginning the day—putting on our own clothes ought to call up thoughts of the naked whom it is our duty to clothe. And it ought to call up thoughts of God's mercy in saving us from poverty and nakedness, and of His laws concerning the taking of clothes in pledge. "Who hast not made me a slave," calls to mind the blessing of liberty, and our duty not to enslave others. Moreover, it ought to remind us, if only for a passing moment, of the bondage in Egypt, from which we, and our ancestors, were delivered. The blessing, "Who openeth the eyes of the blind," calls up thoughts of the blessings of sight and of the blessing of not being blind to those truths which God would have us know. It calls up, too, the blessings of being able to see the beauty of nature. Then there is the thought to check that impulse of sin—the allowing ourselves of being led away from goodness, because of the "delight of our eyes." Furthermore, some yearning might be aroused by this blessing, that those in our immediate environment be made less blind to spiritual truths, and that our own eyes be opened to God's work in history, in order that it may no longer be said: "Who is so blind as my servant?" (Is. xlii. 19.)

It is impossible, indeed, to say these blessings without accompanying their recitation with some very valuable study. But the whole attitude of mind created by the mere acknowledgment that all good comes from God, the whole atmosphere created by the prayers we

utter, during the day, and by those private prayers which we utter for deliverance from evil, is a very effective mode of studying those attributes of God, those relations between God and man, and those relations in nature between cause and effect, that are among the most important parts of *Talmud Torah,* and even of intelligent study of secular life or history.

The Educational Value of "Davenning"

Quite apart from worship in the sense of prayer with deep *Kavanah* or attention and worship in the fuller sense in which hitherto I have used the word, the mere saying of the Jewish service regularly—with just an understanding of the general sense of the words, whether one says them in Hebrew, or in the vernacular of whatever country one lives in—is study and very important study, indeed, in a way that is not generally realized.

What one reads in literature has more influence by reason of what is implied and taken for granted than by what is stated in so many words, definitely and articulately. The reason that a man in a foreign country does not understand the literature of that country is not only because the words and the definite statements often convey no meaning to him, but, also, and to a greater extent, because his mind is not on the plane of thought that is assumed by the writers of that country. Similarly, people of one social rank, of one kind of preliminary education, actually do not understand quite simple speeches and writings of those coming from another stratum of society. It is what is taken for granted, what is implied, what does not *need*

to be said, because every one realizes what it is meant to convey, which makes all the difference.

Now, there are certain principles, certain theories about life and God and man, about the future and the past, that are taken for granted; and, without once being definitely stated, these are insisted on, over and over again, throughout the service of the Jewish Prayer Book. Let us take a few instances at random. To start with, take "The Prayer," properly so called, the *amida'h,* because it is recited standing; it is also called *shemo'neh esre'h,* or "Eighteen Benedictions," because in the full form of the week-day "Prayer" there are eighteen blessings (plus an added one against slanderers). This prayer opens with three blessings, and closes with three blessings, always the same, on week-days, on Sabbaths, on festivals. But the middle blessings—twelve in number on week-days, and only three on Sabbaths and festivals—change with each different occasion for which the "Prayer" is said. Now the mere fact of keeping the first three unchanged, and the last three blessings, in every form of the "Prayer," for every service, at once implies that they embody ideas and supplications of vital importance that every one wants to utter, or ought to want to utter, and on which *all* Jews in the world are agreed. The mere permanence of these six blessings, their very frequent repetition, must serve to impress them on the mind of the worshiper, with much more thoroughness than if he were to attend a whole series of lectures in which these implied principles, ideals and doctrines would be stated categorically, insisted on, explained.

Let us see what are some of the lessons learnt from this part of our worship. The first blessing begins:

"Blessed art Thou, Oh Eternal our God, King of the Universe, the God of Abraham, etc." Here, at once, we have a declaration, made over and over again in other parts of the Prayer Book, not in the form of a declaration, but implied and taken for granted, that the God in whom we believe is an Eternal Being, the supreme Ruler of the Universe, the God whom our ancestor Abraham worshiped, as did his son, his grandsons, and his posterity, of whom we are a part.

A knowledge of the history of the patriarchs, and of our descent from them, is implied and taken for granted. This piece of knowledge, however, is not so commonly familiar as it would appear to be, except to those who have made a study of the Bible from the Jewish point of view. For instance, although it is almost as essentially a part of the Christian faith, as it is of our own, that the history and religious corollaries of the twelfth, and subsequent, chapters of Genesis are part of the passages on which modern culture and modern religion must always rest, nine-tenths of our non-Jewish brethren fail to realize it.

The necessary words *ha-El hagadol* האל הגדול usually translated, "The Great God, etc.," should be rendered, "The only Power that is great, victorious in might, and awful, O most high Deity;" for, *ha-El* is not identical in meaning with *Elohim*. And the way in which it is used here—and in many other parts of the Prayer Book—enunciates a great principle that our God is the Deity, and *THE* Power, and the only One among all the real powers of nature, or the false deities of man; that He is great, mighty, Conqueror of things and of time. (This, as will be seen presently, is an important corollary of the connoted meanings of

Gibbor.) And, He is the only Power, the only Deity among all the real and imagined powers, that is really awe-ful. It is this God we bless here as the One Who "bestows gracious loving-kindnesses, possesses everything:" "the totality," which would be the best translation of *Hakol,* even though unnecessarily awkward and uneuphonious. "And remembers the loving-kindness of the patriarchs, and is bringing a redeemer to their children's children for the sake of His name, in love." In these few words a whole system of theology is implied, and the blessing ends by taking the mind of the worshiper back to the primeval father of our race, Abraham, by blessing the Eternal as his, Abraham's, "Shield."

The second paragraph of the Prayer is even more significant. I am going to suggest that *Attah Gibbor Leolam Adonai* and *Rav Lehoshi'a,* state and imply truths that are almost lost in the common translation "Thou, O Lord, art mighty forever, making alive the dead, Thou art mighty to save." I think that what is said and implied here is: "Thy victory over time and circumstance is eternal: making alive the dead Thou art *all-sufficient* for salvation." The word *Rav* does not mean mighty; it means "much," "numerous," and I think here, "adequate," "*all-sufficient.*" Whereas, *Gibbor,* from the same root as that of the Hebrew word for "hero," "warrior," "mighty man," contains amply the idea of conquest. But even in the bald way in which the usual translations give the meaning of this paragraph, followed as it is by a declaration that God "sustains the living" with loving-kindness, or with charity, "makes alive the dead," with vastly numerous and very abundant mercies, is "the support of the

falling," "the Healer of the sick," and the One who releases those who are in any kind of bondage, and "maintaineth permanently His faith with those who sleep in the dust." This paragraph takes for granted a great number of important theological truths, explanations of history and religious ideas. It insists, too, very definitely, indeed, on the belief in an after-life, a making alive of the dead, and God's eternal *all-sufficiency* to realize man's conceivable hopes in this world and in the next.

The third paragraph of "The Prayer" definitely declares the holiness of God, and implies immediately the holiness of those who praise Him. The mere fact of these three blessings being the permanent, the constant, beginning of "The Prayer," not only shows, but accustoms, the worshiper to realize that the ideas implied as well as those stated in these paragraphs, are regarded as essential to Judaism. The same may be said of the last three paragraphs, also constant, however the middle part of the "Prayer" may be varied.

Retse, "Accept with favor, O Eternal, our God, Thy people Israel, and their prayers, etc.," takes for granted eschatological idealism for this world, and, for the people of Israel, national hopes entwined with love of Zion—the joyous conviction that all those prophecies about the ultimate return of Israel to his own land will be fulfilled; and, finally, a belief in the immanence of the divine Presence, the *Shekhinah.* All this is implied in the first of the three blessings, followed by a humble acknowledgment of duty to God, of our obligation to Him, and of our lives being dependent on Him. It takes for granted, furthermore, that we have spiritual

souls which are in His care, expressing a belief in Divine Providence governing our everyday lives. Something more is implied, though not stated in so many words, the belief that Israel is in exile as a consequence of sins described in Deuteronomy, in Leviticus, and in Isaiah, and that eventually, when they will have become thoroughly repentant and when they will have asked the forgiveness and the help of God, they will be restored to their own land.

Even the fact of the return from the Babylonian captivity, and the parallel of modern and future history with that of the period 700 B.C.E. implied in this, are accepted and studied. Finally, by making a prayer for peace, and a blessing to "God who maketh Peace" —the culminating point of this series of supplications and benedictions, and of the whole "*Tefilla*," or Prayer par excellence—the idea, implied and taken for granted, is that the greatest blessing for man on earth is peace.

Here it may be well to note that the very form stated in the *Talmud* to be essential for the beginning of every blessing, is in itself a very definite lesson in Jewish belief. "No blessing," say our sages, "can be regarded as, or called, a blessing, which does not contain the following elements: The name of the Eternal, the declaration that He is our God, and *Malkhuth* or "Kingdom." This *Malkhuth* or "Kingdom," however modern ideas may have led us to object to the exaltation of the monarchic idea, by using the word "king" as a figure of speech, in talking of the Supreme Ruler, the Creator, as Ruler of the world, is a very essential point in the religious-historic and future idealistic hopes of Israel. These, and the implication born in on

the mind by insistence in proclaiming the kingship of God, in every blessing uttered, are universalistic. They are also specially Jewish; for they teach us to think of the Ruler of nature, who will be recognized one day as God of all the earth—"And God of all the earth He shall be called." Similarly, when at the supplication of the people, and with God's permission, Samuel allowed them to appoint a king—as Moses had said they probably would, and might, under certain conditions—he, Samuel, spoke of God as their only real King. There is in this insistence on speaking of God as "King of the Universe," an implied acceptance of the hope for, and the belief in, the future day: "When God shall be accepted as King over all the earth, and not only in Israel, but among all the nations, He will be *One* and His name One."

Every blessing, then, recited by a Jew, is distinctly a lesson learned by him in a way most effective for the learning of anything in theology, in history, in idealism, and, what is more, in internationalism.

Universalism

The brotherhood of man is implied throughout the whole of the Jewish Prayer Book. And the Jewish worshiper constantly is having impressed on him, and impressed on those who hear him read the service, the implied truth of the first chapter of the book of Genesis —that in the story of the Creation we are given not only the history of the origin of Israel, but a history of the origin of all mankind. Very prominently is this indicated in the grace after meals—a prayer that is supposed to be said by every Israelite after each full meal each day. The first paragraph is purely universal-

istic. It praises God, not as the God of Israel, or as the Feeder of Israel, or as the Feeder of us; it is not mere thanksgiving for "What we have received," or "What we are about to receive," narrowing down gratitude to God, to gratitude only for the satisfaction of our individual, our family, or our national, appetites. But, it is a blessing to God, Who feeds *all flesh* and provides for all His creatures. Not until in the second paragraph is there the mention of the special blessings to Israel—the spiritual, as well as the material. Then, and only then, do we thank God for our land, for our Torah, for our spiritual life. Then, and only then, do we thank Him for our election as His chosen people, and call to mind the blessing promised to us as a nation in the second paragraph of the *Shema'* (Deut. xi.) when we say, "Blessed art Thou, O Eternal, for the land and for the food."

Yotzer, or the Former of Light

Some valuable help afforded by worship to study is in the teaching of many of the deepest and most important truths of Jewish theology and general philosophy, simply by taking them for granted and embodying them in parts of our services. The remarkable teaching with reference to the Unity of God, combined with what I personally think is an implication that there is no such thing as absolute evil, is contained in the blessing, "Former of light," which precedes the blessing and prayer for the love of God to Israel and introduces the *Shema'*. The passage reads as follows: "Blessed art Thou, O Eternal our God, King of the universe, Former of light, Creator of darkness, Maker of peace, and Creator of everything that exists." (*Hakol* "the

all.") This is a slightly modified quotation from a prophetic utterance of Isaiah, when the Israelites were about to come in contact with the Persian religion, which, as popularly understood, recognized a dualism, *Ormuzd,* the god of light and of good, and *Ahriman,* the god of darkness and of evil. The prophet says, in the name of God (Is. xlv. 71) "I form light, and create darkness. I make peace and create evil. I, the Eternal, do all these things." This declaration is embodied in a prophecy primarily addressed to Cyrus, under whose sway the Israelites were about to come, and by whom they were to be restored to Palestine after the Babylonian captivity. It was, therefore, of the utmost importance that they should be warned against the error that while our God, the Eternal, is the Creator of good and of light, that evil and darkness are the work of another god who sometimes appears to be stronger than the God of good. "I, the Eternal, *shape* light, but I am also the Creator of darkness. Peace is made by Me; but I, and I alone, am responsible also for the existence of evil. There is no power but Mine." This declaration is modified in its actual expression by the substitution of the word *Hakol,* (the all, the everything,) for *ra'* (evil); but the sense is not altered in the least. The blessing of God as the Creator of *everything* that exists, including evil, is a necessary prelude to the central thought of the Jewish religion, and to the central thought of the morning service in our prayer-book: "Understand, O Israel! The Eternal is our God, the Eternal is ONE."

Since there is no other Creator, no other Creator of darkness, no other Creator even of the possibility of evil; since our God, whom we worship, is responsible—

at least by permitting it—for all the evil in the world; and, since we know Him to be good, beneficent, benevolent, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy, *all* the evil in the world must be capable of some explanation that will not conflict with our belief in the goodness of the Father whom we worship. Fully, we may never understand it; but even in our short lives, we get glimpses of how some evils are only apparent, of how others prepare the way for good, and of how still others are vindications of justice. But those who trust in God are content to accept these, just as Job came to accept them, as *ha-nistaroth,* "the secret things that belong to Him." We are taught by the following blessing to carry out the admonition of our sages. *Mevarakhim al hara' keshem she-mevarakhim 'al hatov.* "We bless God for the evil, just as we bless him for the good." I cannot help thinking that the corollary of this is: That however difficult it may be for us to understand the evil that exists in the world, *absolute,* irremediable evil does not, cannot, possibly exist; but that the words of Genesis still remain true: "And God saw *all* that He made, and behold it was very good."

It is very difficult to teach a truth like this, with all the necessary philosophic side-thoughts, reservations, and discussions, inseparable from its perfect presentment. But it is easy for any one who has absolute faith in, and love of, God to accept, or rather to *feel,* the truth that since "He that smites, is also the One Who heals, He that causes death, also makes alive," there can be comfort for all evils, and it is possible in all circumstances to love the one God, the Father of all mankind, and the special chooser and God of

Israel. By reiterating this blessing every week-day and Sabbath, as a part of the proclamation of God's Unity, every worshiper is learning and studying a deep philosophic principle necessary to faith and joy, as well as to comfort in times of grief and sorrow—a truth that implies many other truths and many other important principles.

I am inclined to think, also, that there is a special reason why, on the Sabbath, the worshiper continues the blessing: "Everything shall acknowledge Thee, and speak in Thy praise; everything shall declare there is none holy like the Eternal;" while, on week-days, he continues the blessing with: "The One Who giveth light to the world and those that dwell thereon," etc. It is because on the Sabbath the worshiper is supposed to be in a state of peace and joyousness in which he has both leisure and sufficient material evidence of God's goodness and beneficence to be able to accept and to contemplate the difficult doctrines of God as the source of evil. And because on week-days when in the strife and turmoil of business and everyday affairs, he has no leisure for meditation, and too many reminders of the evil in the world, it is expedient to look only and directly at the bright side. On Sabbath, one feels—"This day for Israel is light and joy, the Sabbath of Rest," and on it we can bear to think of the darkness, too, with an assurance that God will wipe tears off our faces.

El Melekh Yoshev, or "God, the King, Enthroned"

One of the most solemn parts of the worship on *Rosh Hashanah,* the day of Memorial, the Day of Atonement, and of fast days generally, is that prayer

embodying the words from Exodus xxxiv. 5-7 inclusive:

"The Eternal, The Eternal, merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in loving-kindness and truth. Treasuring up loving-kindness for thousands of generations, bearing with (tolerating) life-perverting, consequence-entailing sin (avon), rebellious sin (pesha'), and sin generally (ḥataah) and cleansing."

The worshiper repeats it over and over again. In fact, in some parts of the Atonement service it is the refrain of added poems as well as an essential part of several oft-repeated prayers. With its frequent repetition, the worshiper cannot help learning it practically by heart; so that if, with each repetition of it, actually he is not studying it all the time, he is storing it up in his memory in such a way that the meaning of each word as well as its general sense, will call them up in his mind when any association of ideas demands. In that way, he will come to learn some of the deepest philosophic thoughts connected with Judaism.

It may not be irrelevant to discuss, in passing, some of the words, from this remarkable part of *Torah,* which, I think, are so often mistranslated, some of the ideas which, in their full import, perhaps, are not always clearly projected.

Let me take first *poked 'avon aboth 'al banim,* usually translated "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children." This would seem to be in flat contradiction to the teaching both of the Mosaic Law and of the prophets, especially to the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel, i.e.: that God will not punish the children for the sins of the fathers. But a careful

examination of the original Hebrew eliminates the whole of this difficulty.

In the first place, the word *'avon* does not mean "sin," or "iniquity;" but it does mean a special class of sins that give a *twist,* a *perversion,* to the whole of life, of the lives, moral or physical or both, of the children of those who commit them, as well as to the sinner himself. It means, too, idolatries, such as those practiced by the nations of Canaan, involving not only human sacrifice and ideas about God that led to all kinds of unnatural and brutal sins—sexual sins that entail hereditary diseases, evil conduct and evil thoughts of special kinds that act automatically from generation to generation, producing more and more evils, in the form either of sin or suffering. These things were appointed (*pekudim*) by God, as Creator, in the order of nature.

In the Ten Commandments, and in the passage from Exodus xxxiv, a *warning* is given, *not a threat,* so that fathers, for the sake of children, should know that the Creator, *Bore,* was also *Poked,* the Appointer, of self-acting vindications of the straight or right way (*derekh ha-yashar*) so that they should not pervert it (*ivah*). With regard, however, to all other sins—*averah* (transgression), *pesha'* (rebellion), *het* (sin of omission, or sin generally), and any other evil conduct, *except 'avon—only* the sinner is punished. It is curious, however, that "forgiving iniquity" should be the translation generally given for *nose avon. Nose* does not mean to "forgive;" it means to "bear with," to "put up with," to "tolerate," so that the God who "bears with" and tolerates every kind of sin, including that which entails hereditary consequences of evil, does

not permit the absolute clearing away of all sin from the guilty. In verse 6, the Eternal God is described as "merciful and gracious," *ḥannun;* "gracious" means granting *undeserved, unearned* mercies. And I venture to suggest that taking this passage in connection with *"aḥon et asher aḥon,"* (I will be gracious to whom I, of My absolute will, choose to be gracious,) implies that while the entailed evil consequences of *'avon* will come, and do come, normally, on the children of those guilty of this particular category of sins, the merciful, miraculous, arbitrary intervention of the merciful God, often may "cause to pass away the evil decree."

If the worshiper thinks of every word in this constantly reiterated part of our most solemn services, he will have made a thorough study of some of the most beautiful, the most comforting, the most warning and, at the same time, the most difficult parts of Jewish theology and of *Torah;* so that the chanting of these words, when the *Torah* is taken out of the Ark on our "Solemn Days," is not merely an act of worship, but it is, consciously or subconsciously, one of the most significantly important pieces of *Talmud Torah.*

Some of the finest prayers, as such, are also the best material for study. I will mention three that suggest themselves at once, though they belong to very different categories.

First, the *Kaddish.* "Magnified and sanctified be His great name in the world which He hath created according to His will. May He establish His kingdom during your life, and during your days, and during the life of all the house of Israel, even speedily, and at a near time, and say ye, Amen."

Congregation: "Let His great name be blessed for ever, and to all eternity."

Minister: "Blessed, praised, and glorified, exalted, extolled and honored, magnified and lauded be the name of the Holy One, blessed be He; though He be high above all the blessings and hymns, praises and consolations, which are uttered in the world; and say ye, Amen.

"May there be abundant peace from Heaven, and life for us and for all Israel; and say ye, Amen."

This prayer, which is said over and over again in the liturgy for every week-day, every Sabbath, and every festival, is considered, also, of such public importance that it is written so that all might understand it—not in pure Hebrew—but in *Aramaic,* the vernacular of the Jews of Palestine at the time of its composition. It is the prayer, by the public recital of which every mourner demonstrates his belief in a double immortality—that of the individual soul and that of the race of Israel, proclaiming publicly his hopes for, and his faith in, that great future time, when the kingdom of God will have been realized on earth; and when as our brethren of another faith say in a prayer based on it, "God's will will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven."

The constant repetition of this prayer on every possible occasion, after every section of Psalmody and, with a special addition, after every piece of *Talmud* or rabbinic study of the *Torah,* consecrates that study and shows that it is an act of worship. The insistence on its being said in a congregation, the teaching of it, even to young children, at the most impressionable age, and in circumstances never to be forgotten; when

they have lost either father or mother, all this tends, at least, to make this act of worship both an object lesson, and a lesson in words of the most vital truths in our religion. It tends, too, to make it a link uniting all Israel, reminding them that we are responsible for one another. (*Arevin ze la-ze.*)

Another of the three prayers which I have in mind is also in *Aramaic*—the sometime vernacular of our people—but in a purer *Aramaic* than that of the Kaddish; quite exceptional, too, are its language, its thought, and its feeling, its literary style, its rhythm, and its power to awaken emotion and thought. But, curiously enough, it has only a semi-official service and, in those congregations that use it, is generally said inaudibly, *and,* still more generally, it is hurried over, so that it can hardly be said to have been recited at all. I refer to *Berikh Sheme de Mare alma.* Whoever recites this prayer, either with intellectual or emotional *kavana* (intent, devotion), has impressed upon himself a summary of Judaism in its most spiritual and its most definite form.

"Blest be Thy name, O Sovereign of the World! Blest be Thy crown, and thine abiding-place! * * * Thou feedest all, and sustainest all. Thou rulest over all; rulest over kings, and the kingdom is thine. I, the servant of the Holy One, blessed be He, bow down before Him and the splendor of His Law at all times and seasons. I place not my reliance in mortal man, or in any being to whom divine attributes are ascribed, but in God in heaven, Who is the sole true God, whose doctrine is truth, and whose prophets are true, and Who abundantly bestoweth His kindness and truth.

In Him do I trust, and unto His name, all holy and revered, I will ever offer praises * * *."

The third of the prayers I have in mind is one that is repeated, over and over again, in some parts of the Day of Atonement service and on all the minor fasts. It contains a short quotation from the portion *Ki Tissa* (Exodus xxxiv), a passage that embodies declarations on the deepest problems of religion—the religion of all mankind, and the religion of Israel in particular: "And the Eternal passed before his face and proclaimed, 'The Eternal, the Eternal (The Only) Power that is merciful and gracious.'" (Gracious, in the sense of the Hebrew word *ḥannun,* bestowing freely, unearned and undeserved favor, has no equivalent in English but it is the key-word here in solving one of the deepest problems.)

I have given a brief explanation earlier, therefore, of the other words occurring in this important passage. Every word in this verse of the *Torah,* every prayer that has been composed around and is repeated with it, every liturgical poem into which it has been inserted as a refrain, is a lesson in thought and emotion, in the theology of Judaism, in the history of Moses, in his relation with God, and in his relation with the people whom he led through the wilderness. It is a lesson in all that is most essential in *Talmud Torah* and in the philosophy and in the theology of Judaism. It is a lesson, moreover, in the philosophy that underlies all the religions that have grown up from Judaism in the Islamic and in the Christian worlds. I do not pretend to suggest, for a moment, that every time a spiritual-minded and learned Jew springs up and exclaims, "Hashem! Hashem!" that as little as one-

tenth of the philosophic, of the religious, or of the linguistic contents of these few verses is called up to his mind, and I am quite ready to admit that their very constant repetition tends, in some instances, to weaken their emotional effect, perhaps, and that it becomes well nigh impossible often to study them intellectually every time we encounter them in the Prayer Book. But it is a good thing to live with them; and the worship that involves the saying of *El melekh yoshev* followed by *Adonai! Adonai!* etc., is, from every possible point of view, one of those acts of devotion which makes worship the very best form of *Talmud Torah.* One does not stop to learn immediately all that the prayers, and the quotations in them, have to teach; but there is a new interest aroused. We are sent back to the Pentateuch to study those wonderful events and ideas contained in the portion *Ki Tissa.* We are sent back into ourselves to think over, in our hearts and souls, what problems of sin and forgiveness have to be solved, and how we can solve them. We are given, on the tips of our tongues, a musical utterance, declaring the mercy and the graciousness of God. We are given a theory of repentance which may make us feel that it is well worth while to "Take with us words, and return to our God," after we have forsaken Him by sin.

The Siddur in General Education

One of the chief elements necessary in all education is the cultivation of the emotions. Worship, in any proper sense of the word, is the best possible means of cultivating the emotions. The study of literature, even the understanding of the simplest every-day

speech in any modern language, is impossible without mental readiness to understand and interpret metaphors and similes. It would be difficult to conceive a better school for the cultivation of these qualities of mind than is formed by worship in any sense of the word, and especially by the worship embodied in the Jewish Prayer Book (*The Siddur*).

The whole Hebrew Prayer Book is poetry in all the common, and in some of the uncommon, meanings of that word. To read it habitually even if it be not always fully understood must needs leave memories and the lingering perfume of words, of metaphors, of similes, of rhythms, of cadences, of events, of thoughts, of Biblical passages, and of Midrashic interpretations implied rather than stated. It is an intensive education, a vital branch of *Talmud Torah.*

The study of *Torah,* as Rabbi Baḥya has explained in *The Duties of the Heart,* is not confined to the reading and the studying of the sacred books; it consists partly in a deep, a thorough, a contemplative study of all those works of God by which He has given to man indications of His will, just as much as it does in the inspired words of Moses and the prophets: "The heavens are telling the glory of the powerful God, and the work of His hands the expanse sets forth. Day unto day bubbles over with eloquence, and night unto night makes knowledge vivid. There is no speech and there are no words set in order, and, without their voice being heard, their line is gone forth in all the earth, and to the utmost confines of the world their poetic utterance." [4]

[4] Poetic utterance, not "words." *Millehem—Worte,* not *Wörter. paroles,* not *mots.*

The world is symbolism. Every material object we see and know is a tangible metaphor, a concrete parable or simile, a pointing of the finger of the Creator to a whole group of truths, lessons, guidances. This contemplation of the heavens and the earth and the worship it evokes, is a study of His pointing or guidance, and the indication of His will: i.e., *Torah.*

Now, in like manner, the mere habitual saying of the week-day and Sabbath and festival service is an unconscious, perpetual study and teaching of the kind of poetry that is an indispensable key to the interpretation of the material world, and of the revealed word of God in the Bible. It is perfectly effective only when the prayers are said with perfect *kavana* (intention, devotional attention), and in a language thoroughly understood by the worshiper, with not only the dictionary meanings and denotations of each word, but with the connotations and the harmonies and the etymological and the historical associations that cling like an atmosphere around each word. It will be obvious, at once, that such an understanding of the prayers, at the moment of devotional worship, can be perfect only when they are said in the original Hebrew by one who, even though he has not necessarily a scholarly knowledge, has at least a sympathetic, and an instinctive, familiarity with the words and roots, and *feels* the subtle accuracy with which they were used always by the Hebrew writers. It may be attained, in part, by any one who reads a loving and exact translation or paraphrase, in *Yiddisch Deutsch* or in English, made by some one who uses the vernacular, as Milton would have used English, and who gives the Hebrew writers credit for having known

Hebrew! It may be partially attained even by those who say their prayers in Hebrew—knowing Hebrew only very imperfectly—without any ability to translate them into any language, but who, from constant reiteration of the prayers, come to acquire, by association of ideas and intuitive feeling, a knowledge more real, though not capable of articulate expression, than that of many "dry-as-dust scholars."

Song in Worship-Study

A very great help to worship, as a means of study, is music. Some of our traditional melodies are so potent in arousing the right feeling, and in suggesting the right thought, that they make the mere hearing or repetition of certain parts of our services, lessons and commentaries.

Worship, Lishma, for Its Own Sake

Worship, in order to be effective as a mode of study, should be pursued from beginning to end, without the least conscious idea on the part of the worshiper that he is studying, or learning, or teaching. Some idea that he is teaching might not interrupt his worship; but the worship must be *Lishma,* for its own sake. The moment an extraneous thought or purpose, other than that of approach to, or converse with, the Deity, comes to the worshiper's mind or into his feeling, what he says ceases to be perfect worship. The mode in which one worships must be that of the *ḥassidim harishonim,* the early pious ones mentioned in the *Mishnah,* who waited, in silent meditation, long periods before and after the prayer, and who, the Mishnah relates, did not allow themselves to be interrupted, or to

break off, even if a scorpion climbed up their heels. This intense concentration and whole-heartedness in worship, whether the worship takes the form of supplication or of praise, even though it excludes the possibility of conscious study, has the effect of study just the same.

But there is one kind of worship that may, and should, be consciously treated as study by the worshiper—the performance of outward acts of worship which have a symbolic meaning and the purpose of handing on thoughts, historical memories, ideals, hopes, and emotions, from generation to generation. Although some of these acts have to be performed with much of that (*Simcha Shel Mitzva*) "joy of the commandment" which the music of the harp gave to the prophet in help of his poetic teaching, yet some of them may be performed almost wholly consciously, with their educational objects in view, either for the worshiper himself or for his children or for his co-religionists, or even for the non-Jewish world.

Amongst these is the putting on of the phylacteries, *Tefillin:* "So that thy child may know that with strength of hand the Lord brought you forth from the land of Egypt." Then there is the dwelling in tabernacles for eight days at the joyous harvest festival: "So that your generations may know" that He made their fathers to dwell in tabernacles (*Sukkoth*) when He brought them forth from the land of Egypt. There was too, the eating of the *Paschal Lamb* with the attendant ceremonies, and there is the "rejoicing before the Lord" by waving a palm branch, etc., which should have the double purpose, in the mind of the worshiper, of awakening emotions of gratitude for the fruits of

the earth and of demonstrating to onlookers, Jewish or non-Jewish, that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." Moreover, by the *Sukkoth* act of worship—by appearing before the Lord of the land bringing tribute—we demonstrate that not man's strength, nor his skill in husbandry, nor even the "bounteous sun" has brought us the harvest and its blessing; but that we owe all to the will and to the favor and to the almighty power of the God who can "restrain the heavens that there be no rain," who can "withhold rain from the land" whose inhabitants refuse to acknowledge Him.

In totality, then, through *worship as a mode of study,* through the service of God, the Jew finds himself in possession of a reward richly commensurate with the service—an understanding of the One Creator, a knowledge of Him, who is the source of all goodness, of all happiness, of all spirituality, of all life. And it is that understanding, that knowledge, applied by the Jew to the affairs of his everyday life, this radiation of goodness, of happiness, of spirituality in the lives of his fellow-men that prove the result of his reward got through *worship as a mode of study.*

V

WHAT IS ORTHODOX JUDAISM?

BY

LEO JUNG

V

WHAT IS ORTHODOX JUDAISM?

What is Orthodox Judaism? Rather let me state what it is not. By a process of elimination we may arrive at a right definition. The word orthodox in itself is insufficient. It expresses nothing positive about the Jewish faith. I would suggest Torah-true as more appropriate, were this Germanic compound acceptable as an English term. However, for our present purpose, we may use the term orthodox to designate the man or woman who lives in accord with Jewish faith and practice.[1]

Is It Fundamentalism?

Orthodox Jews have been called fundamentalists. The inference here is that the Jew puts a single interpretation on Biblical accounts, holds such exclusively true, and rejects as blasphemy every effort at reinterpretation. This charge is not half as amusing as it is untrue. Interpretation in Judaism has been not only a privilege but a duty. It is through interpretation and reinterpretation that the Bible has remained a book of life. From the first Midrash, through the philosophical works of the Middle Ages down to the commentaries of our own time, from Midrash Rabbah to Samson

[1] See the writer's "Essentials of Judaism," *Jew. Libr.*, I, p. 12.

Raphael Hirsch and Malbim, a thousand interpretations have been offered, each striking a new note, each offering a new nuance, each welcomed as a new contribution to the Torah.[2] We never hear of any Jew being read out of the synagogue because of such interpretation. On the basis of the acceptance of *"Torah min hashamayim"* (Revelation), freedom has been allowed to individual ingenuity. Fundamentalism among the Protestant non-Jewish friends of the Bible rests on the Authorized Version (prepared by Gentile scholars of the 17th century) or some other translation of the original Hebrew text and of the so-called New Testament, every letter of which translation or mistranslation they consider divine truth. Such fundamentalism is un-Jewish. But if Jewish Fundamentalism implies loyalty to such Jewish fundamentals as faith in God, in Revelation, in the binding character of Jewish Law, then every good Jew is a Fundamentalist.

Is It Out Of Date?

Even among Jews we find some who consider orthodox Judaism as out of touch with modern times. Never did they err more profoundly. Jewish law develops through application of precedent to new conditions, exactly as English or American law does. The

[2] Typical instances are Talm. interpret. of Biblical passages: Babli Baba Bathra 15a; Bab. Sanh. 71a and 92b; Bab. Yebamoth 8a. See the comment. of Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Isaac Arama on Ex. xxxiii. 32; Ibn Ezra on Deut. xxxiv. 1.—Cf. the introd. to Levit. of Abrabanel, Ibn Ezra, Rashi, Malbim, and David Hoffman. See S. Gruenberg, Bibelexegese; S. Jampel, Vorgeschichte Israels 2nd ed. and for the history of interpretation L. Jung, Fallen Angels, Introduction. See also Tos. Yomtob Mishnah Eduyoth, I, 5, note 9. Ḥatham Sofer al sugyoth ha-shass, ed. A. S. Blumenthal, p. 53a.

Responsa of the rabbis, dealing with modern questions (for which the loyal Jew seeks the answer of the Lord), keep the Jew in rapport with changes in his environment, and with the problems of today and tomorrow. These Responsa accompany Jewish life all through history, and help the Jew to live with the Torah as with a law which is ever alive, fresh and clear with every new question and answer. Just as reinterpretation has given Jewish literature the best of Greek thought and the essence of Hegel and Kant, so, through application of precedent to new conditions, has Jewish practice remained vital and creative.[3]

Judaism is in advance of our time, not only in its prophetic dream of the days when nation will not lift up sword against nation, but especially also in its social and marriage legislation. *"Torah im Derech Eretz,"* the combination of the Judaic ideal with modern methods of transmission, has been a time hallowed postulate of Judaism.

The main disability of Orthodox Judaism lies in the fact that it is—in this country at least—largely unknown in theory, and rarely seen in fair operation.[4] Orthodox Judaism is not to be identified with Ghetto conditions. It claims no inherent kinship with inefficiency or lack of articulation. It does not deny or reject anything that is good and beautiful in modern culture. Its greatest handicap is the profound ignorance as to its character, function and destiny prevailing in the mind of the American Jewish youth. To the majority of American Israel, Orthodoxy is associ-

[3] Cf. Philo, Ibn Ezra and Hirsch with e.g. Rashi's Commentary on the Torah.

[4] See L. Jung, "Living Judaism," sub 'Jews and Judaism in America.'

ated with unsightly mass habitation on the lower East Side. Torah-true synagogues are associated with a lack of decorum, a pulpit empty of a message for the youth, and a profound disability to understand or to deal with the problems facing Jewry in this country.

Such weaknesses are due not to Orthodoxy but to the orthodox Jew. They are the results not of orthodox Jewish teaching or living, but of czarist oppression, sweatshop conditions and the average plight of the immigrant. Fundamentally and enduringly let us distinguish between Orthodoxy as a system of life and the present panorama of orthodox Jews in America. That conditions have been improving is well known. That the orthodox Jew is arousing himself, is becoming increasingly felt. But Orthodoxy is neither responsible for, nor to be associated with, the disabilities or faults of the American orthodox Jew.

II

What is Orthodox Judaism?

What then is Jewish Orthodoxy? Orthodoxy is the expression of the genuine historical faith of Israel, based upon the revelation of Sinai, the Torah, the Bible, the teaching of the rabbis. Orthodoxy is the Jewish expression of Judaism. Orthodoxy embraces worship and charity, public righteousness and private devotion, social service and individual purity. Judaism is based on the assumption that ideas must be made tangible for man to realize them. Hence, Revelation (Ex. xx) is followed by Legislation (Ex. xxi). The great ideals taught in the Torah cannot be translated into life, unless their message is brought

home. The religious idealism of the Torah would remain vague and remote, unless the people were trained to consult their ideal interests as of essential importance.[5]

Ceremonies, symbolizing profound spiritual truth, are part of the method of Judaism. What to the uninitiated seems to be a maze of legalistic devices, is but the blessing of a system of life, so arranged as to attune us to the highest ideals of man, to accustom us, by the humanitarian exercises of Mitzvah, to look for the ideal rather than the material, to look upon all humanity rather than upon a single clan, and upon the whole of Jewish history rather than upon a narrow local scene.

What Does Torah-True Judaism Offer to Israel?

1. To Israel it still represents the single guarantee of a national survival through the survival of the national ideal. Jewish life, the life in the law, is the commentary to Judaism, without which it remains a book with seven seals. Jewish life is the preserving form of Judaism, without which in many instances within our historical experience, Judaism has unfailingly disappeared.

2. Judaism is the spiritus, the sense of Jewish life, without which Jewish life becomes a meaningless series of customs and ordinances. Orthodoxy requires of the Jew to know the character of Judaism and its history, to be familiar with his own duties both collective and individual. If he lives in accordance with this teaching, being trained through the ceremonies, he receives unparalleled and unintermittent ethical guidance. The

[5] See Sinaist I, 3, essay on Mitzvah by the late Rabbi Meir Jung.

selfsame law teaches him his duty towards God and Man. The selfsame Torah teaches him that there is no safer way to God than through social righteousness, no way towards the salvation of man but through loyalty to the laws of God. Prenuptial purity is no occasion for self-righteousness; it is just loyalty to the behest of Jewish law. Honesty in business is no achievement; it is a minimum contribution to social welfare as demanded by Jewish law.[6]

3. That the ceremonies may not become either stale or meaningless, Talmud Torah, the study of the Torah, has been enjoined as a sine qua non of Jewish life. It is for this reason that both gray theory and mere accumulation of knowledge are frowned upon. Jewish education is a training in character.[7] Judaism keeps the Jew striving towards the consummation of his ideal.

In spite of all the ingenuity of our rationally analytic minds, it has not been possible to explain away this fact that Judaism, as expressed in Jewish life, has proved the one most potent survival value in history.

What does Torah-true Judaism offer to the individual Jew of today? Has it a message of particular significance for his private salvation, an efficient and ennobling answer to his personal problems?

How does it affect his adolescent years, how promote his spiritual growth, how secure for him happiness, peace, a feeling of dignity, of worthwhile life?

Through Jewish education it offers the youth an early training in the classic texts of the Bible, and ac-

[6] According to Jewish tradition the first question asked the soul of the demised before the Throne of the Lord is: "Hast thou dealt honestly in business?"

[7] Hinukh (the term. tech. for education) means etymol. "training."

quaintance with the heroic life of the great hearts and minds of our history.

Judaism teaches that God is interested in every man and in every part of man.[8] Hence, the whole of life is raised to a high level of importance and responsibility. Through the Jewish environment Judaism refines the character of the Jew in direct proportion to individual loyalty. Through synagogue and school, through Palestinian memories and hopes, through insistence on our labor for the upbuilding of our Homeland, the Jew is kept in contact with the timeless ambition of Israel, with its national life and its cosmopolitan hope: that the day will come on which Israel will see his faith vindicated, the goal of his national history achieved, having struggled and marched through the ages and having led through terror and contempt to the gradual humanization of humanity.

The Messianic ideal, as implied in the Abrahamic covenant,[9] as expressed in the prophets, as endorsed by the rabbis, is the final neginah of Judaism, played on the harp of Humanity.

Orthodoxy offers to the Jew the full radiation of Judaism. The Torah, the law of life, brings every aspect of life under its ennobling influence. Just as insistence on the dietary laws teaches the sacredness of every human function as a force of godliness, just as Jewish purity laws imply the noblest significance of propagation, so does the human scene clothe itself with strength and beauty as it is enveloped in the spirit of a religion that calls all life sacred.

[8] Hashgachah Pratith, The Fatherhood of God, is the eternal refrain of the Hebrew Bible.

[9] Unto Abraham the Lord promised: "In thee all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Hans Driesch[10] has taught us of late to look upon everything as a totality. In another sphere, Spinoza, despite his Bible criticism, reëchoes the Jewish postulate to view everything *sub specie æternitatis,* from the aspect of eternity. So does Judaism, the life program of the Jew, include social justice and personal devotion. Thus is Judaism righteousness, but more than righteousness. Thus does Judaism insist on intelligent faith, but on more than logical cognitions. Thus does Judaism endorse national consciousness, but also creates cosmopolitan yearning. Torah-true Judaism includes individual inspiration and collective idealism, the Psalmists' song, the prophets' burden. Thus to the Torah-true Jew nothing Jewish is alien and everything human is near to heart.

Thus the Torah-true Jew receives the inspiration of the Torah in every possible aspect of life. Only the Jew who lives true to this all-embracing program of the Torah, can receive such benefit. Any reduction of Judaism implies not only reduced loyalty to the Torah, but robs him who reduces it, of that measure of inspiration. It also deprives him of this profound ennobling influence of the *Mitzvoth* (Ceremonies). He has made his life poorer by the lack of these sweet mentors.

He who puts on *Tefillin* every day is through them daily reminded of the duty of right thinking, right feeling, right acting. The daily service, the Sabbath, the festival days with their ceremonies maintain sound national consciousness; their symbolism keeps the Jew attuned to the deathless ideals of Israel. He who performs the *Seder* in Torah-true manner, receives un-

[10] *Psychologie, Neo-Vitalismus.*

forgettable instruction in tolerance and good-will. Together all these exercises refine every relationship of the Jew, intensify his value as brother, father, friend, citizen, fellow-man.

III

Judaism and Some Modern Problems

It is a trite truism to refer to the Torah as the glory of Israel's past. But the glory of the Torah lies not only in this. It is perfectly legitimate, but it should also be perfectly superfluous, to point again to the fact that the Jews have tended to disappear from countries in which loyalty to the Torah has disappeared. The main asset of the Torah to the modern mind is the exceeding workability of its program for the future. Among the teachings contained in that much assailed but little known code, the *Shulchan Aruch*,[11] I would fain single out three or four to indicate how conformity to the plain statements of Jewish law will offer the most satisfactory solution of outstanding modern problems. I mean industrialization, the growing dissatisfaction with marriage, the problem touching employer and employee, and young folk's Weltschmerz.

(*a*) *The Machine Age*

We have boasted for many decades of the achievements of mechanical ingenuity. We have hailed the industrial age as superior to the past in promoting

[11] The *Shulchan Aruch* ("Prepared Table," because all the laws of Judaism are classified in its four volumes as against the difficulty of access in the Talmudim) is the authoritative code of Jewish law, compiled by Rabbi Joseph Caro in the 16th century and being brought up to date by the Responsa of the rabbinic leaders of every generation.

happiness and raising human standards. Of late, a different chorus has made itself heard. Bertrand Russell roundly declares that industrialization well nigh reduces man to machine, that from the womb of industry there emerges a generation utterly mechanized, incapable of initiative, incapable of judgment, whose conscience is adjusted by the tabloid paper, whose views are obtained from the yellow press, whose creative instinct is atrophied, who are part and parcel of the steel and the gasoline, of chewing gum and movie and every commercialized folly.

Sir William Cantlie in England and a half dozen of our leading men in this country have drawn public attention to the alarming increase of heart disease, and the unhealthy life of modern man. In a fine book, *The Great American Band Wagon,* Charles Merz points out the utter stupidity and aimlessness of the average American life, continually on the go, continually enraged at the car in front, and shouted at by the chauffeur at the back, racing up and down splendid roads to "go" nowhere, to return,—to boast of speed records and the magic quality of one's car.

Most woebegone is the cry for restfulness and real recreation.

During the whole week, that which essentially makes a human being lies dormant, buried under the excessive load of business worries. Efficiency and specialization have confined man to a deadening monotony of routine labors, which all but destroy his human ego. On Sunday,—a violent day of amusement follows a violent week of work. There is the same lack of measured enjoyment, of calm restfulness, the same lack of equilibrium. Hence a growing dissatisfaction with the

values which life offers. Neither the limousine of the millionaire, nor the "good time" of the worker, nor the enjoyment of middle class morality, seems capable of satisfying that yearning for harmony and peace. Thus a restless week is followed by a restless Sunday, an exciting Sunday by a hard week, and the strain on our vital forces becomes tremendous. Hence on the one hand a mere animal life, on the other a spasmodic craving for escape, a growing tendency to forget in dissipation, to drown one's despair, or to strive for both and overstrain one's heart.

International conferences, round table meetings attended by experts, and a hundred and one formulæ and panaceas have been suggested.

Pressing the Button

Yet the solution was given long ago. Mr. Russell and Sir William may be pardoned for not knowing it. But the Jew may not. The one true solution has been offered, accepted, acted upon and found most beneficial. The Jews in the Torah have been given a day of rest that is utterly different from any other day of rest. It is a day of a different attitude. On the Sabbath, the Torah-true Jew not only rests but he is free from the strain of the mechanical devices of industry. The superficial mind considers it ludicrous that we are forbidden to press an electric button on the Sabbath, to answer the telephone, to write, to ride, to buy, to handle money. All these prohibitions they feel, in modern times, should be done away with. These objectors do not realize the tremendous protection afforded to us by these strict enactments. On the Sabbath, by reason of these strict laws, the Jew is freed

from the life-destroying strain which modern industrial life has put upon him. On Shabbos, the Jew has a *neshama yethera,* an "extra soul," which revitalizes his heart and mind. It is a day which affords to his creative genius opportunity for reassertion of hopes and aspirations.

On Shabbos, a Jew is supposed not to touch his week-day tools, the pen with which he writes, the ledger in terms of which he thinks, the money wherewith he buys. All these things are removed from him, and with them their strain. He therefore is enabled to liberate his energies and dedicate his mental capacities to a reconsideration of his vital urges, to meeting friends, to a reliving of his racial history, to an untrammeled communion with God. He does not open his business letters, and thereby gains, for one day, absolute rest from the burdens of the downtown spirit, of the downtown tenor of life.

What the world needs is a *neshama yethera,* the extra soul of the Sabbath day. Man is groping towards the light. Man is seeking an escape from the toils of the very industrial age of which he is boasting so incoherently and loudly. The Sabbath offers the solution. The Jewish Sabbath, as enjoined by the *Shulchan Aruch,* is the solution. And only in so far as the best minds and hearts of contemporary humanity will approach that solution, will they gain for themselves and their contemporaries that restfulness, that happiness, for which they are yearning.

(*b*) *Marriage*

Women have been battling for emancipation, for the right to be even as men, in the many fields of

human work. Women have stormed bastille after bastille, they sit in the courts to judge, in the manager's office, in the parliaments of many a nation. But they have neglected the emancipation of woman in their work for the emancipation of women. There is not a system of life both actual or theoretical, which allows woman even in marriage complete control over her soul and body, which makes her mistress of herself in physical as in spiritual matters.

There is ebb and tide in woman's life, just as there is ebb and tide in every human relationship. There is a period of rest and a period of work, a time when emotions lie dormant and one when the heart asks for love, a time when to give is to take, and one when loneliness is the greatest blessing. Woman has such time and natively knows such waves of emotion and sentiment, the desire for companionship and the yearning for fullness, rest and bottomless solitude.

But the same woman who battles for her rights in the political arena has not yet grasped her duties to herself in her own home. She who would collectively rebel against any infringement of her public privileges, yet suffers domestic degradation, so that woman, even the modern woman, has very frequently become a means in marriage instead of being an end in herself. And that brings about a loss of self-respect and the consequent deterioration of the marital level.

How can we solve the problem? What is its solution? The only satisfactory solution has been offered by Jewish law. Such law is not created by majority vote. It presupposes a completely new orientation in matter of sex. It presupposes a different sex-Weltanschauung. It leaves to love all its beauty, but it

makes it sacred. It raises marriage to the sanctity of humanity, whose propagation is divine, whose forces are, every one of them, a part of God's spirit in man, of the evolving creative morale, which is human history. Thank God we Jews who honor Jewish law have the solution.[12]

Without the consciousness of the sacred function of our vital forces, man's married love is a degraded affair. With it, it holds prospects of great beauty. And lest by a sudden gust of passion or the inert brutality of the thoughtless, that ethical strength be withdrawn and thus all splendor fade from love life, the Torah has appointed the ceremony to keep guard at the entrance to the home of love, so that man may respect the frontier, that woman may ever again consecrate herself to the fullness of her love. The ceremony of the immersion (*Tevilah*) is but an outward symbol of an inward glory, but it is the outward form which holds all the inward worth. Where this form has been preserved intact, there, indeed, it has usually been the prelude to marvelous comradeship and unfailing love, because husband and wife revered the rite and hence lived together in never flagging respect and interest. Love as a mere sum total of sensations, without the spirituality which self-restraint creates, without the comradeship which mutual respect brings about, without the independence which understanding and consideration condition—is a pitiful thing. Neither unrestrained passion, which leads to surfeit, nor celibacy nor hermit life, are in the plan of the Creator. But creative love, parenthood of beautiful and healthy

[12] See I. Unna, "Marriage in Judaism" (*Jewish Library,* First Series, no. 10).

children—are in accord with the very purpose of human existence and make men and women nobler and happier. All this is but a chapter in the *Shulchan Aruch,* a prose paragraph in the Jewish code of law.

(*c*) *Employer and Employee*

In one of his fine plays, John Galsworthy portrays the arch capitalist, bent on absolute preservation of feudalism, and the arch Socialist, blind follower of doctrine. Both are defeated.[13]

In the past, strikes have been a fight to the finish, leaving in their trail broken fortunes, the cry for revenge, a stealthy waiting for a new opportunity to crush the now victorious opponent. Of late, however, a new idea seems to gain ground. Arbitration is the cry of the day. A learned judge has proclaimed arbitration the solution of industrial problems, and he who invented it and provided its machinery the greatest benefactor of modern man. If he were to look up that old-fashioned book, the *Shulchan Aruch,* he would be magnificently surprised. He would read its paragraphs dealing with social legislation and among them he would find solutions of moot questions, which would feed his humanitarian impulses and satisfy his intellect. He would see there that the truck system, the thorn in the side of America's working people, is expressly forbidden. He would see the laborer's rights protected and even the poor capitalist receiving his share of fair treatment. But, above all, he would find that arbitration has been a matter of Jewish law, a matter of Jewish practice, for hundreds of years, contained in the paragraphs of the *Shulchan Aruch,* and in

[13] John Galsworthy, *Strife,* a play. Bertrand Russell, *Icarus.*

the countless volumes of the Responsa. Unhappily the modern Jew, and especially the Torah-true Jew, by permitting himself to be confined to one or two aspects of Judaism, has neglected his message to the world, and limited the teachings and the potentialities of the Torah.

(*d*) *Weltschmerz and Torah-True Judaism*

If the Messiah spirit were more living and real among us, we would battle for some league of nations with at least that fervor and determination, which are now spent in ephemeral fads. If, in conformity with Jewish law, we studied our texts with that devotion and energy which we seem more apt to give to Indian legends, Gypsy rhymes, or Chinese folklore, we would appreciate with Bergson that Judaism, to be understood, must be seen from within. If we read the chapters of Jewish philosophers touching the values of ceremonies, we would agree with Havelock Ellis,[14] that ceremony is the one indication of profound culture, the one single way to fructify individual endeavor and to render beautiful collective living.

It is Torah-true Judaism which first taught and has since maintained tolerance towards men of other faiths. The most spirited defender of the Torah, Jehudah Halevi, who scorned the annual task of modern rabbis and Jewish pulpiteers to bring Judaism into fictitious harmony with fictitious modern culture, is the man who taught that Christianity and Mohammedanism are coöperating with the Jew in the task of bringing near the time of the Messiah.[15] Torah-true Judaism keeps

[14] Havelock Ellis, *The Dance of Life.*
[15] Jehudah Halevi, *Al Khazari,* Englished by H. Hirschfeld, II, 3.

the Jew ever alert, ever conscious of his national duty, ever in tune with his international obligations; teaches him God in a hundred ways and bids him remember Him wherever he goes, whatever he does, "when thou sittest in thy house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up."

Judaism is the Solution of the Jewish Question

"Neither to become assimilated with the other nations nor yet to be isolated from them completely, but rather to live with them in constant exchange of thought and act, in order to fulfill its own mission by teaching the supremacy of God—that seems to be the historical function of Israel." [16] The conscious and unconscious striving towards this ideal is the meaning of all Jewish history. To perpetuate ourselves in spite of the tremendous forces making for the disintegration of the Jewish type, we need the consolidating, strengthening, vitalizing influence of the Jewish environment. Such Jewish environment is created by the life in the law. Only there pulsates the spirit of Judaism, only thence emanates that intensive permeation with our historical ideals, which enable us to continue not only our national existence, but also our contributions to the common treasury of man. From the colorless abode of assimilation we have no message for the world. If we are earnest about the Jewish question we realize that its solution lies with us. Anti-Semitism, intolerance, are Gentile problems. Ours is the task to raise Jewry to the heights of Judaism. The method

[16] M. Auerbach, "Survey of Jewish History" (*Jewish Library*, First Series, p. 306).

has been given to us, even the way and the goal. Neither Torahless nationalism nor any other travesty of Jewish history will bring us anything but dissolution. The strongest message of Judaism for our day is the all-embracing character of religion. Judaism must remain the single upward urging force every day of the year, every hour of the day. It brooks no pigeon-holing of religion, no reduction of its scope, no confinement of its message. Its function must be as catholic as its eschatology. Torah-true Judaism is the Judaism which insists in theory on the necessity of religion to embrace synagogue, home and life, and which provides in practice guidance for every action, addressing the bride at home, the employer at his office, the youngster in school, the judge, the priest.

IV

A Word to the Reader

A fundamental necessity in a teacher is intellectual honesty. Looseness in a parent is a double crime; one against himself, the other against the children entrusted to him. Many modern Jews come from orthodox homes. Most of them have had little opportunity to see genuine Torah-true Judaism. They are perhaps sentimentally attached to the laws and customs of historical Israel. Reënforce that attachment and make it abiding by a first hand research into the possibilities of the old faith, both theory and practice!

Torah-true Judaism in this country has not failed. It has been greatly misunderstood. It is hardly articulate today. In popular language: it has not had its chance. As teachers, rabbis, or parents, you are to

teach Jewish children. Before you teach be sure to know. You cannot know from notes you have taken, you will understand only as the result of your own seeking. You cannot comprehend Judaism from the tower of an exaggerated sense of your wisdom. Knowledge is acquired by humility. You will not understand Judaism if you are satisfied to obtain your views from the various Ghettoesque editions of the *American Mercury*. As decent men and women you must be willing to listen patiently, to study patiently the other side. How many of you know the literature in defense of Torah-true Judaism? Yet if you knew it all, it would remain empty knowledge, unless you receive in addition thereto the radiation which comes from living Judaism, the thousand and one revelations, begetting intellectual sympathy, making you see and appreciate from within. You do not want to give up Judaism, orthodox Judaism, simply because you do not know it. Your sense of fairness will not permit you to abandon it just because you have not seen it. As men and women trained in the powerful sanity of academies, you cannot be satisfied either with parroty repetition of fashionable phrases, or with thoughtless acceptance of whatever is more convenient. I say to you: Yours is a supreme, sublime duty. Within you, unexpressed, inarticulate, is genuine love of the ancient religion. Within you there is a solid yearning for wholesome bread. In the name of fundamental academic standards, in the name of intellectual honesty, I charge you with the duty to be unflinchingly honest with the God of our fathers, not to reject that which has been only partially known to you, to endeavor to know both sides before you decide.

For, above and beyond being teachers you are Jews. The characteristic of the Jew is, has been, should be, fairness. I bespeak fairness from Israel of the Torah, for the Torah of Israel.

VI

THE CENTRALITY OF PALESTINE IN JEWISH LIFE

BY

DAVID DE SOLA POOL

VI

THE CENTRALITY OF PALESTINE IN JEWISH LIFE

A classical legend tells of Antæus, the mighty giant of Libya, who overcame every one who grappled with him, until Herakles, learning that the secret of his strength was contact with Mother Earth, lifted him into the air and crushed the life out of him. The symbolism of this legend may be aptly applied to the Jewish people. Its strength can be measured by the intimacy of its contact, its weakness by the weakness of its contact, with the historical motherland of Jewish life, Palestine.

Palestine has been the most comprehensive and most potent formative influence in Jewish life. Indeed, the whole expression of Judaism in the Torah is unintelligible without reference to Palestine. True that the founder of Judaism, Abraham, came from Mesopotamia; but it is no less true that Judaism does not begin until the moment when Abraham is bidden to leave his native land and to get him forth to the land which we know today as Palestine. Dwelling in various places there, he planted stakes in the soil. With the acquisition of the cave in the field of Machpelah he obtained his first symbolic permanent title to a portion of the land of Canaan.

In that land of Canaan, repeatedly the divine promise was made to him, "And the land which thou seest I give to thee and thy seed forever . . . from the river

of Egypt to the great River Euphrates . . . for an everlasting possession." This basic sacred covenant runs as a refrain through the whole Book of Genesis. It is repeated to Isaac and confirmed to Jacob. Joseph's last charge, when he is dying in Egypt, is that his bones shall be taken up from Egypt and brought back to the land which God swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.

In these foundation stories of Jewish history, the everlasting relationship between the Jewish people and its land is emphasized as organic and inalienable. Palestine is established as the land of Jewish promise and hope. What follows in Israel's story is the long but successful struggle to attain an increasingly close hold on the land, despite violent outside influences weakening that hold. The exodus from the land to Egypt is a misfortune necessitated by sheer famine. The exodus from Egypt back to the land is the fulfillment of a centuried promise, that marks the beginning of Jewish national history. The Hebrews ceased to be a disorganized mass of spiritless slaves and became a people in the prospect of returning once more to Canaan, the Holy Land, the land sworn to the patriarchs.

The story then tells of the wandering struggle to approach the land, and the military struggle under Joshua to regain it. It continues with a depiction of the time of the Judges, when the weakness of the hold on the land threatened the very existence of Jewish life. Not until the time of Saul, and still more definitely of David, did the Jewish tribes consolidate their tenure of the land. Then and only then was Jewish life first given the opportunity to develop its own free, char-

acteristic contributions to mankind's social, moral and spiritual wealth.

The capture of Jerusalem by David focused the Jewish relationship to its land in one sacred spot. There the Temple was built, serving as a sanctuary, around which Jewish spiritual and national life integrated itself. To that supreme shrine the people of the land would come up from all over the country for the three pilgrim festivals of the year, bringing with them the fruits and produce of the land. As generation followed generation, and ever more hallowed religious memories clustered around the national shrine, Zion became more distinctive by the symbol of Judaism. To this day the Holy City is the unique, outstanding, local symbol of Jewish religious life and national hope to the scattered millions of Jewry.

So organic was the connection that was set up even in ancient days between the Jewish people and its land, that when David was forced through the enmity of Saul to flee beyond the confines of Jewish Palestine, he remonstrated with Saul for driving him out from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord. It was, in David's words, as much as to say to him, "Go serve other gods." Even at that remote period, before Jerusalem had become the national nucleus and international shrine of Judaism, the outlaw David felt that outside of his own beloved Jewish Palestine it was religiously impossible for him to lead an unalloyed Jewish life.

This refrain resounds throughout the Bible; Judaism in its all-engrossing entirety is possible only in the land of the Jews. Other lands are, from the religious point of view, what the prophet calls unclean lands. When

by the waters of Babylon the exiled Jews sat down and wept when they remembered Zion, and they that had taken them captive asked of them words of song and mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion," the sobbing answer of the Psalmist was:

"How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a foreign land?
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning.
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
If I remember thee not,
If I set not Jerusalem
Above my chiefest joy."

Emotionally, the exiles found it as impossible to sing the songs of Zion in a strange land as religiously they found it impossible to carry out the fullness of their religious duties outside the land of their religious tradition. The books of the Bible speak with one voice in regarding the exile not as a divinely motivated blessing, but as a punishment imposed by the unswerving, divine justice. The Bible knows nothing of that favorite pessimistic rationalization of the nineteenth century assimilating Jew, that the scattering of Israel was a divine dispensation for the blessing of the Jew. It uniformly interprets it as a punishment for Israel's and Judah's moral transgression and religious faithlessness. The exile is threatened by the prophets before the event as the most calamitous conceivable outcome, and by the prophets after the exile as Israel's deepest woe. Though a Jeremiah with unclouded political sense might counsel the exiles in Babylon to settle down there and seek the peace of the city whither they had been carried away captives and pray unto the

Lord for it, he nevertheless continued unceasingly to voice the glowing, golden hope of the regathering of the people and their restoration to their own land, after the penitential chastisement of the exile shall be complete.

Then there break on the ear the superb pæans of joyous rhapsody which fill the later chapters of the Book of Isaiah, depicting with lofty emotional fervor the return of the exiles to the land of their covenant. One Messianic vision after another glistens from the pages of the sacred text, reaffirming the inevitability of the gathering of scattered Jewry back to the Holy Land and the Holy City, and the reëstablishment of the Jewish people as a religious community in their own land, freed from the religious contaminations of the exile. When the Lord brought back "those that returned to Zion, we were like unto them that dream." The dream was fulfilled. The Jewish community which had entered almost into the jaws of death in the Babylonian exile, was reëstablished in Palestine, and the hope of Jewish survival was renewed.

During the following centuries, Jewish life struck deeper and deeper roots into the soil, gaining from that soil a spiritual strength which flowered into a continuous creation of brilliant religious values. From time to time, Syrian, Egyptian, or Roman imperialism strode bloodily across the land, trampling in carnage upon this free Jewish spirit, until finally the legions of Rome destroyed the Temple, the Holy City, and ravaged much of the land. But though in the last desperate conflict hundreds of thousands of Jews lost their lives or were sold as slaves far and wide through the Roman empire, even the ruthless might of imperial

Rome was not able to shatter the physical and the spiritual bond which linked the Jew to his land. The conqueror might strike medals recording that Judæa was captive to Rome; he could not uproot from the heart of the Jewish people that love of their land which had grown ever more closely intertwined with their heartstrings through the consecrating chastisements of their history and joys of their religion. From all over the exile Jews continued to send their offerings of money to the community on the site of the Temple to which they had formerly sent their offerings, and this link with the land and its Jewish dwellers has persisted through the Middle Ages into our own days.

Not even the murderous suppression of Bar Kochba's revolt and the driving of a plow over the site of Jerusalem could snap the bond between Israel and the land of Israel. Jewish life, renouncing political statehood and concentrating on its spiritual treasures, persisted in Palestine in the face of the bitterest oppression. Judaism was taught in secret in attics and caves, until rabbinical academies could flourish more openly. There was no hiatus in Jewish occupation of the land. There were always Jews in Palestine. It was in Palestine early in the common era that our traditional Jewish prayer book received a great impetus for its development, in compensation for the central, official, national worship destroyed with the destruction of the Temple. The Mishnah, the basic post-Biblical code of Jewish law, put into writing around the end of the second century of the common era, epitomizes the essence of the oral teaching of the academies in Palestine in the preceding centuries. Two centuries later, there appears the Palestinian Talmud, a purely Pales-

tinian development of the teachings of the Mishnah. A little later, the Masorah, i.e., the storehouse of grammatical study safeguarding the letter of the text of the Hebrew Bible, comes to its fullest development in Palestine. The city of Tiberias was long the center of the intense cultivation of Jewish learning which continued in Palestine through the early centuries of the common era.

Modern Hebrew poetry was born in Palestine among the Paitanim of those centuries. Much of the Midrash, that almost inexhaustible mine of lofty ethics, deep faith, poetic imagery and sage teaching that is so characteristic a creation of the Jewish genius, was developed and compiled in Palestine at this time. The Targum (the Aramaic translation of the Biblical text), reflecting to some extent the traditional and Midrashic interpretations of the Bible, is also for the most part a product of Palestine of those early centuries of the common era. In a word, all that is of the highest value in Jewish religious and literary productivity during seven or more centuries after the supposed Roman destruction of Jewish life in Palestine, proves to be the creation of a Palestinian Jewry that was, if politically impotent, spiritually vigorous and intensely creative.

When in the seventh century, the Moslem invasion overran Palestine, it found there a strong Jewish life. When in the eleventh century, the Crusaders rode into Palestine, they found Jewish communities still in the ancient land. They did their merciless best to wipe out by massacre every trace of Jewish life in the ancient land of the Jews. But more than the fire and sword of men's hate was needed to prevent Jews finding their way back to the land. In the twelfth cen-

tury, the two greatest Jews of the era, Jehudah Halevi and Moses Maimonides, found their desperate way to the land, and tradition tells that both are buried there. In that same century, the traveler, Benjamin of Tudela, found Jewish communities in one center after another in Palestine. In the beginning of the thirteenth century (in 1211) more than three hundred rabbis of France and England went together in a spiritual crusade to settle in Palestine. In the words of the old record in the Shebet Jehudad, "they built there synagogues and houses of study." This migration of rabbis was motivated, as were many other returns of the Jew to Palestine, by the conviction that only in Palestine can one lead a complete Jewish life. Indeed, Rabbi Jechiel of Paris set forth to the land of his fathers, among other reasons, so that he could there offer the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, a duty he was precluded from fulfilling in the diaspora. It was Palestine, the optimum land for a pious Jewish life, which drew this long procession of rabbis and other pious Jews towards the land about which the ancient rabbinical tradition said that living in that land is as important as all other commands of Judaism put together. There, said the ancient rabbis, one has a God. There one lives without sin ("the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity"), and to be buried there is as though one were buried beneath the holy altar.

Naḥmanides (thirteenth century) counted the duty of living in Palestine as one of the 613 commandments of the Law of Moses. His personal fulfillment of that commandment gave a new impetus to Jewish settlement in the land. From his time onwards, with the

waning of the violence of the Crusaders, Jewish residence in the land of Palestine has been continuously and uninterruptedly growing. Jewish life in Palestine in the fourteenth century is faithfully depicted for us by Estori ha-Farhi. Especially from Egypt and other neighboring lands pilgrimages to Palestine were frequent. During the later Middle Ages, many a Jew and outstanding rabbi, impelled by an age-long homing instinct and driven by persecution in the lands of exile, found his dangerous way back from the western lands of Christian Europe to a secure refuge in Moslem Palestine.

The Sephardic Jewish settlement in Palestine which grew up after the expulsion from the Iberian peninsula revived the ancient learning of the four holy cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias and Safed, and produced the brilliant mystic settlement of sixteenth century Safed, and that great stabilizer of Jewish life, the *Shulchan Aruch*. In the next century, refugees from the horrors of persecution in Poland brought new vigor to the Ashkenazic community. It is needless to specify further the familiar, modern story of the increasing strength of the Jewish settlement in Palestine during the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Suffice it that it has here been indicated that from the passage of the Jordan under the leadership of Joshua 3,000 years ago to this day, there has been an organic, uninterrupted continuity of Jewish life in the land of Israel. This physical continuity of Jewish settlement in the land, persisting invincibly in the face of the hosts of Nebuchadnezzar, the legions of Titus and Hadrian, and even the wantonly bloody crusading hordes, is a fact of far-reaching historical importance.

It substantiates physically the unquestioned spiritual claim of the Jew on his land of promise. It reveals the Jew as continuously in Palestine from of old, and the Christian and the Moslem as of yesterday. It justifies Jewish immigration into Palestine today as a matter of right and not of sufferance.

Is it true today, as it was in Bible times, that Jewish life is dependent on Palestine? The rabbis of old enumerate several important groups of Jewish duties which can be carried out only in the Holy Land. The agricultural laws of the jubilee and the release of the soil apply to Palestine and not to the exile. All the Biblical regulations concerning Jewish civil government, together with their traditional interpretations, apply only to Palestine and not to the exile. The whole of the vast code regulating the sacrificial system, the offerings of the first fruits, the tithes, etc., applies only to Palestine and to the Temple in Jerusalem. The laws of ritual cleanliness, for the most part, apply only to Palestine.

But we would be mistaken if we interpreted this as implying that the rest of Judaism is independent of Palestine. In point of fact, the rest of Judaism is saturated with Palestine, for Judaism is the outgrowth of the Bible, and the Bible, as a Palestinian book, can ill be understood and lived apart from its Palestinian background. Even today the tourist coming to Palestine sees the living Bible, and understands its background, its figures of speech, its atmosphere, its culture, its laws, as he has never been able to do outside of the land itself.

The very Hebrew language of the Bible is the ancient language of Palestine. A Jewish Judaism, if

the phrase may be allowed, is inseparable from the Hebrew language. So long as Judaism preserves the Hebrew language, which the Bible calls "the language of Canaan," that Judaism will be enveloped in its original Palestinian Hebraic atmosphere. Those Jews who yield up Hebrew for a so-called American Judaism, yield up the true and original Palestinian spirit of their Bible and of their tradition, and substitue for it a non-Palestinian and non-Jewish spirit. As truly as English is instinct with the gentile Western spirit, or Arabic speaks with the accents of Islam, or Yiddish expresses the soul of the Eastern European ghetto, so truly does Hebrew express the soul of free Palestinian Jewish life.

But the spirit of Palestine is felt in modern Judaism in much more than its Hebraic linguistic envelope. The whole structure of the Jewish calendar is Palestinian. It was in Palestine that the calendar which regulates Jewish life was established. The time table of Jewish life is set not by the meridian of Greenwich, but by that of Jerusalem. Hence the tradition of the two days of the festival, so as completely to overlap the time of celebrating the festivals in Jerusalem. Our three major Jewish festivals are reflections of meteorological conditions in Palestine. Passover is the spring festival of Palestine. With it we associate the reading of the spring pastoral, the Song of Songs. In addition, Passover recalls the story of the Exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land, and the motif of the Seder rapidly passes from the slavery of Egypt to the Hallel of Palestine.

Shabuoth (Feast of Weeks), with its flowers, is the festival of the wheat harvest of Palestine. Between the seven weeks of Passover and Shabuoth, we count

the seven weeks of the Omer, preserving the memory of the daily offering of barley in ancient agricultural Palestine. The festival of Succoth (Tabernacles) is in its celebration a joy of the late Palestinian harvest. The Succah, with its display of fruits, reproducing the Palestinian harvest booth, and the palm branch, myrtle, willow and citron, are all elements in the celebration of the festival of the harvest ingathering in Palestine. The prayer for rain on the eighth day of the festival, as the prayer for dew on Passover, is a prayer for these blessings to fructify the soil of the ancient land of the Bible. Though in our northern lands the snow may be falling, nevertheless, the Jew in those lands sits in his Palestinian Succah, by an invincible effort of his emotional will and an indomitable faith in his ultimate return to his land and its vineyards reconstructing around himself in an irrelevant environment the fragrance of the harvest of Palestine.

The sole function of Tisha B'ab and the other minor fasts is to recall to the Jew the tragic days of defeat and destruction suffered in Palestine. Chanukah is naught but the continued rejoicing at our having reclaimed Palestine and our Judaism for ourselves over 2,000 years ago. The New Year of Trees, a festival which has taken on new meaning since the blossoming of Palestine in our own days, is celebrated in these climes in the heart of winter; it is the Arbor Day of Palestine.

Thus, with the exception of the purely spiritual days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, when the Jew gives himself up exclusively to introspection and the purifying of his soul, and the minor festival of Purim, from beginning to end the calendar of Jewish

fasts and festivals is Palestinian in origin, Palestinian in sentiment, Palestinian in symbolism and Palestinian in significance. Take away from Jewish life its Palestinian relationship, and you must remove from it practically the whole calendar of Jewish observances.

The religious attractive power of Palestine is regarded in Jewish law as stronger even than the cohesion of the strongest of all socio-religious unions—the relation of husband and wife, and the relation of children to parents. For a wife who refuses to go with her husband to Palestine may be divorced therefor, forfeiting even the rights otherwise assured her by her Kethuba. Similarly, parents who would forbid their children going to Palestine, forfeit their right to be obeyed in this particular. For the command to live in Palestine has the higher authority of the Divine Father.

The legacy of Palestine permeates Jewish life even down to fine detail. The wine used at Kiddush, at a wedding, at the Seder, and at every Jewish celebration of joy, is a sacramental symbol that naturally originated in the vineyards of Palestine. The Talith is a garment which, *ceteris paribus,* one sees worn in Palestine today as the traditional costume of the primitive Canaanites. Covering the head in the reverence of worship reflects not the standards of the Occident, where convention bares the head in respectful gesture, but those of Palestine where dignity and respect demand that the head should be covered. The breaking of the glass at a wedding is the reminder of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. In the grave itself some of the physical dust of Palestine is placed together with the earthly body of the Jew who has

died. From birth to death, the Jew who lives a Jewish life is surrounded by the poetry, the symbolism and the influences of Palestine.

Every synagogue is built so that the worshiper, when entering or facing the Ark of the Law, shall bow towards Jerusalem, and in every minyan of prayer, the worshipers, when standing, face the direction in which Jerusalem lies. Page after page of the Prayer Book, that spiritual continuation of the Bible, breathes the hope of Zion rebuilt, the gathering of her exiles and the reëstablishing of Jewish life in its center in Palestine. On fast days the Jew bows himself to the ground and lifts his voice in dirges bewailing the destruction of the Sanctuary and organized Jewish life in Palestine. On these and other notable days in the Jewish year, he fills his prayer book with the glorious poems of Jehudah Halevi and other inspired singers of the Middle Ages, who always end their odes, psalms and hymns with a prayer for the restoration of Jewish life in Palestine.

Such are some of the expressions in Jewish religious life of this unparalleled attachment of more than three thousand years to the land in which Judaism was born and grew up. It is as true today as it was in the days of King David, or by the waters of Babylon, that a complete Jewish life is unthinkable without Palestine.

The Jewish people has done its best to carry Palestine with it on all its wanderings, bearing in its bosom the Bible, which is the voice of Zion, and the ceremonial of Judaism which is the nexus of physical continuity with Zion. Ardent souls, unsatisfied with this, have in all generations, at danger to life and limb, broken the shackles of their exile and made pilgrimages

to the Holy Land. Theirs have not been armed crusades, but the quiet, passionate seeking out by the Jewish soul of the source of its inspiration and the place of its millennial hope. In any generation it has required only the ecstatic outpourings of a Messianic enthusiast to stir up Jewish communities to acclaim a pseudo-Messiah, and prepare to set forth to Palestine under his leadership. Jewry was ever ready to believe that the appointed time had come when God would arise and have compassion on Zion, and her servants would again take pleasure in her stones and love her dust. One of the most pathetic chapters in all the poignant history of the Jew is this constantly recurring vision seen through a blur of tears of a miraculous Messiah to reëstablish Jewish life in its fullness in Palestine.

In our own days, this Messianic enthusiasm has been tempered by the realization that Heaven helps those who help themselves, and the Jewish will to persist and to reintegrate Judaism in the Promised Land is taking on organized forms. Palestine is not regarded by Jews as a refuge for the oppressed of Jewry. The very agricultural colonies in the Argentine settled by Jews rescued from European persecution, in their perfect freedom lift up their eyes to Palestine as to the symbol of Jewish hope. They send their contributions for regenerating the land that is hallowed by the whole of Jewish life. The articulate voice of the Jewish people has declared with intense emphasis that no East African Protectorate can take the place of Palestine, for only in Palestine inheres Judaism's inexhaustible wealth of spiritual associations. As unerringly as the compass points to the magnetic north, so to Palestine

turns the soul of the Jew who craves the opportunity of living a free, unconstrained, fulfilled Judaism, at home in its natural environment.

Whether we look at the physical national history of the Jews with its unbroken attachment to the Land of the Fathers, or whether we look to the spiritual history of the Jew expressed in Judaism with its thousandfold roots in and fruits from the soil of Palestine penetrating every observance of Jewish life, Palestine stands revealed as the background of the Torah, the matrix of the Jewish spirit, the home of the Jewish people, the central fact and symbol of our Jewish unity.

VII

SHEḤITA

BY

S. LIEBEN

VII

SHEḤITA

[*Ritual Slaughter*]

"And thou shalt kill of thy herd and thy flock as I have commanded thee." (Deut. xii. 21.)

From this verse of the Bible originate all the exhaustive, detailed regulations governing Jewish Ritual slaughter, to be found in the Mishnah, Tosephta, Talmud, in Maimonides' *Mishnah Torah,* in the *Shulchan Aruch,* and in the Rabbinic Responsa—a vast literature that, for over 2,000 years, has reached every land where Jews have lived.

I

The Shoḥet

(The Slaughterer)

"All those who occupy themselves with 'Sheḥita' (slaughtering) are craftsmen," teaches the Talmud. And well may that be asserted; for, none is admitted to the practice of "Sheḥita" until he has passed the required rigid examination. Moreover, in "Sheḥita" unlike the custom in other vocations—even a well-tried, trained, and experienced "Shoḥet" becomes disqualified for service as soon as he evidences the slightest diminution of physical or mental power. Sheḥita fitness requires the combination of a well-trained hand, physical virility, an unblemished character, an unques-

tionable religious conduct, and a fundamental knowledge of all the details of "Sheḥita," together with the knowledge of that which immediately follows it—the inspection, "Bedika."

II

"The Ḥalef"

(The Knife)

The Shoḥet must be capable of keeping his knife in good condition. He must be able to sharpen and to hone it. He must know, with precision, everything pertaining to its sharpness, its weight, its elasticity, in order that the act of Sheḥita may be performed with expeditious ease, without exertion to himself, and without torture to the animal. The Ḥalef must be examined both before and after each act of slaughter. If, after such act of slaughter, the slightest flaw be found thereon, that animal becomes unfit for food and it must not be eaten. There are different kinds of knives, each separate and distinct, for the slaughtering of different kinds of animals—large cattle, small cattle, or poultry. The Shoḥet, in order to insure the easiest and best method of slaughter for the animals, must keep each of these knives strictly for its own species.

III

The Holding Fast of the Animals

In order that the Shoḥet, with his faultless knife, may be able to perform his Sheḥita properly, the animal must be cast in a perfectly motionless position. The Shoḥet can "fix" only small poultry in such position, without assistance. But the larger species of poultry, and especially the large and small animals,

must be cast, by some one else, in a perfectly motionless position immediately before the act of Shehita begins. Only under such conditions can the Shohet perform his duty, without any danger of injury to himself.

The "fixing" of hens and doves, and of still smaller fowls hardly can be detailed. Skill, in such "fixing," is perfected by practice. Long experience results in acquiring the maximum required dexterity of hand and finger. The Talmud says: "The 'fixing' of a little dove for 'Melika'—the art of killing the poultry offerings —is one of the most difficult branches of the sacred service." This art is rendered the more difficult because the "fixing" has to be done with the left hand only, while the right hand remains free, ready to perform the slaughter. Shehita of the larger birds is more simple; for those like geese, turkeys, pheasants, etc., may be killed with the aid of another person who firmly holds the body of the fowl, while the Shohet bends the neck back with his left hand, and in that way accomplishes a perfect grip. In some instances, clever and strong-armed Shohetim accomplish this feat, alone. They grip a goose between their knees, their left hand bends the neck back, and the right does the killing.

Calves, sheep, and goats may be held in position, in either of the following two ways: by an assistant who holds the animal on an especially constructed table, while the head hangs down from the edge of the table: or, by the whole animal being hung, from its hind legs, upon a strong hook, so that the head is rendered motionless by the animal's own weight. In either of these cases, the Shohet has only to stretch the skin, to slaughter without difficulty.

A more difficult feat is the casting of larger cattle. To accomplish this quickly, without danger to the animal and to the bystanders—to cast and to prepare the animal for slaughter, holding it motionless, either on its back or on its right side, is a problem that can be solved completely by modern technical achievement. Before the slaughter-house had been mechanized as it is today, before the days of pulleys and ropes and other mechanical devices to aid in this difficult procedure, the butchers and their assistants, through the training of considerable experience, had become so adept in the handling of the larger cattle, that the casting and the holding of the animal for the Shehita was a trivial matter. Even today, in the smaller slaughter-houses, where there is no machinery for the rendering of such assistance, butcher boys, with the aid of ropes, are able, with the utmost ease and precision, to cast the largest animal. In larger slaughter-houses, the butchers, lacking the training and practice, are not so dexterous. There, everything is done mechanically. And, because the mechanical operation lacks swiftness in casting the animal, it is always conspicuous to the onlooker. For that reason, too, some people have formed the opinion that this method of slaughter is more painful than any other. It is that opinion which gives rise to notorious propaganda against the Jewish law of Shehita. At regular intervals within the past eighty years, movements against the Jewish ritualistic killing have arisen in most European countries. But in almost every instance, the objection has been leveled to a greater degree against the pain inflicted in the casting and the holding of the animal than against that of Shehita itself. The method of casting the animal

and of putting it into position for slaughter is being improved. And everywhere, in Jewish localities, inventions for apparatus to handle the animal painlessly, for this required preparation for Sheḥita, are receiving much attention and thought.

Older methods of preparation for Sheḥita are too numerous to be dealt with in details. This presentation, of necessity, therefore, will have to be restricted to a description of the principal ones.

1. The oldest method, dealt with by the *Shulchan Aruch,* is that in which a long stout rope is used. With this rope, both of the front, and one of the hind, legs of the animal are tied. Notwithstanding these three bound legs, the remaining free leg will permit the animal to fall easily, since it must fall. Then, as the animal lifts its head, it is put in the required, motionless position without difficulty.

2. An especially constructed derrick lifts the animal, on chains or straps, and then, after its legs are tied, lays it down gently.

3. The animal may be locked in a box or tub turned by either mechanical or manual power. When the animal is suspended at an angle of 90 to 180 degrees, the Sheḥita can be accomplished at once.

IV

The Movement of the Head

If, in casting, the animal is unable to move its legs, it moves its head all the more. The simplest way to prevent this, is for the butcher to clutch the horns and hold the head down. But there are many kinds of mechanical holders, from a simple iron bar to a well-

built mask that covers the entire head. Those adept in handling these holders accomplish their task with a greater ease than those who work with their bare hands. Slaughter-houses equipped with these holders always use them.

V

The Position of the Shoḥet During the Sheḥita

The Shoḥet steps forward, with his tested knife (some moisten it with water) in his right hand, to the right of the animal from the back. He sanctions the process by reciting the blessing "al hasheḥita." After that, he thoroughly cleans the skin at the animal's throat, removes hair or wool, and decides the exact spot for the Sheḥita cut. Then, with his left hand, he firmly grips the skin at the throat, lifts it, and stretches it towards the head. With quick strokes, without pressing the skin muscles, he cuts from the left towards the body through the large blood-vessel and the trachea (windpipe) and the esophagus (gullet or food pipe), almost to the bone. Immediately after that, he steps back, washes the blood from the knife, and tests it on the flat and sharp axes. Should the least imperfection be found on the knife at this time, the slaughtered animal is declared "nebela" (uneatable carcass) and not permitted for food.

VI

The Cut of the Sheḥita

According to the Sinaitic tradition, the animal may become "nebela" (uneatable carcass) in five different ways.

a. *Sheḥia:* If during the Sheḥita cut an interrup-

tion takes place, no matter of how short duration—even a fraction of a second—either voluntary or involuntary.

b. *Derasa:* If the knife is not moved back and forth at the cutting, but is pressed in.

c. *Ḥalada:* If the knife is stuck behind the food pipe and pulled outward, instead of the reverse way.

d. *Hagrama:* If the cut is made so high towards the head that the part of the windpipe of the greatest circumference is left with the body.

e. *Ikkur:* If the trachea or esophagus are not cut out but torn out.

From these five principal negative rules regarding the cut, the positive rules can easily be deduced. To avoid the danger of (d) Hagrama, the place of the cut must not be too high. We shall see that it is essential, from a humane standpoint, to make a very deep cut in the throat.

The cutting must be effected on a skin that is tightly stretched. For when the knife severs hard, resisting skin, it runs very rapidly through the remaining softer parts, the incision is wide and the spouting blood has an abundant freedom of flow from every cut blood-vessel and vein.

The strict rules concerning the efficiency of the Shoḥet, the qualities of the knife, the holding of the animal, and the details of the cutting when carried out according to the Jewish ritualistic prescription, all of these in their cumulative effect achieve an unconsciousness and death for the animal, so swift and painless as to stamp this method of slaughter, in the highest degree humane.

VII

The Animal After the Shehita

The animal, which is held fast until the Shehita is complete, is released immediately after the cut, though the legs remain tied. The onlooker may then observe how quietly the head of the slaughtered animal lies on the ground. The most striking spectacle, which compels the observer's attention, is the speed with which the blood rushes out of the cut. Most of the blood runs from the body; only a small part from the head. The blood-stream itself runs from both sides of the trachea (windpipe). This can be plainly discerned if the incision is wide open and the head lies backward. The breathing of the animal, which ceases immediately after the Shehita, soon begins again. The sound of this post-mortem breathing is like that of a deep roaring. Often it is so forceful as to sound like barking. Every expiration brings the blood gushing forth, with renewed intensity; with each inward breath, the flow relaxes. By this time—and sometimes a little sooner—movements of the head become noticeable. The head is lifted from the ground; a pallor comes over parts of the mouth and the eyes. The entire face, the eyes, are set in motion. At the same time twitching movements appear in the legs, which, until then, have been perfectly motionless. They stretch and pull on the ropes that tie them, and then relax. These movements of the head and legs and the groanings are apt to give the impression that the animal is conscious and in pain. It is necessary, therefore, to declare with the utmost emphasis that in about two or three minutes after Shehita, the greater part of the blood has been

drained from the head [1] and complete unconsciousness has been caused.

Only after the animal has ceased to give any signs of life, is it recognized by the religious rules as dead. Then begins the further work on it—the skinning, the opening of the belly and the breast, the examination of the stomach, of the intestines, and of the lungs. For

[1] In proportion to the size of the animal, the amount of the blood lost may be from ten to fifteen quarts. The bleeding diminishes gradually, until only indifferent drippings can be noticed. It is now possible, by means of extracting the carotid arteries from the depth of the wound, to start a fresh flow of blood. But this flow is negligible in comparison with the first. Neither has it anything to do with the Shehita which was consummated with the first cut; nor is it the Shohet who performs this secondary act. The reasons that the bleeding stops while there is still a quantity of blood left, are as follows:

The stretching of the skin, before the Shehita, affects all parts of the neck. The carotid arteries, the anatomical nature of which is more elastic than muscular substances and the flesh, immediately after the Shehita, shrink back to their normal state, while all other muscles and flesh remain as they were, when stretched. For that reason, the higher up on the throat the cut is made, the larger is the portion of the carotids that snap back after they are cut apart. If the cut, however, is placed deeper, then the carotids remain more on the flat of the cut. It is clear that, if the cut be made higher up, the snapping back of the stretched blood-vessels causes a stoppage in the bleeding much easier than if the cut be made lower; for example: in the first place, the veins, buried in the flesh, become stuffed up. Secondly, blood clots are caused, which prevent the flow of the blood. But, in the case of the deeper cut, neither of these undesirable conditions obtain: so that, from a humane point of view, the deep cut is recommended. In that way, too, the unpleasantness of the second cutting, for the release of the remainder of the blood, becomes unnecessary.

About four or five minutes after the Shehita, new movements are noticed in the extremities, and often in the muscles of the head. At this time, the bleeding is practically at an end. The snoring breaths, too, are irregular and infrequent, the new movements are of a different character from the first ones; they are often spasmodic and are caused by the loss of the blood. The religious rules give no significance to these movements. But, the irregular movements immediately after the slaughtering give evidence to the Shohet, as is required by the rules of Shehita, that the animal before the slaughter was fully alive with vitality and life-energy.

not until all of these have been satisfactorily passed on, is the animal pronounced as permissible for food (*Kosher*).

VIII

Opinions Regarding the Sheḥita

The movements after the slaughtering have been used by opponents of Sheḥita as a basis of attack against it. Innumerable attempts have been made to emphasize the "brutality" of Sheḥita by pointing to the movements of the animal after such slaughtering. Many veterinaries have tried to find symptoms in the animal immediately after the slaughter which might be construed as entire, or partial, consciousness. Much has been made, too, of the animal's "terrified look," "rolling eyes," "lifting of the head towards heaven," etc. Mention is made, moreover, of the reflex, which lasts long after the killing and, in consequence, furnishes grounds for the opinions which condemn Sheḥita as brutal.

The literature on Sheḥita, concerning these opinions, is extraordinarily large. Opponents of Sheḥita have gathered those opinions which find brutality in Sheḥita. On the other hand famous anatomists, physiologists, and pathologists, in the human and veterinary mediums, are all agreed in the support of Sheḥita.

IX

Can Sheḥita Instantly Destroy the Consciousness of the Animal?

The answer to this question presupposes that the meaning of the word "consciousness" is clear. But the

conception of "consciousness" varies in the case of individual naturalists, philosophers, and psychologists. The only direct and authoritative guide to follow is that of experimental research which examines all the phenomena in the light of best contemporary scientific methods.

Very little work has been done in this direction. Nevertheless, by experiments on the brain of the animal, some facts, relative to the location of the sense of pain in the animal, have been recognized and established.

Here, only the most important results may be summed up:

1. It has been proved that immediately with the cut the circulation of the blood in the brain ceases, and that the very sensitive cells of the brain are cut off from every supply of nourishment suddenly and immediately.

2. It has been proved that the circulation of the blood, suddenly stopped by the Shehita cut, ceases in all the blood vessels, even in those not actually cut, and that such circulation is not revived.

3. It has been proved that those parts of the brain to which our methods of testing are accessible, lose their activities immediately after the Shehita cut and never regain them.

4. It has been proved that when the supply of blood to an animal's brain is cut off through ligature, the brain is rendered functionless; so that, when, in such case, an animal shows movements which appear to be coming from a perfectly normal animal, those movements are *not* conscious movements.

5. It has been proved that if an animal be untied immediately after the Shehita, its movements at that time would not indicate any degree of consciousness.

6. The so-called psychic reaction of the pupil (of the eye) i.e., its sudden dilating immediately after the periphery has been exposed to painful irritation, ceases immediately and forever with the Shehita cut.

Summing Up

Summing up, it can be stated on the authority of scientific experts on animal psychology, that the brain of an animal immediately after Shehita loses all its functioning ability. As to the subsequent movements, cramp, grunting, etc., these take place without the participation of the brain, hence *unconsciously*. The backbone, the nerves, the muscles, the limbs, are far from being as sensitive as the nerve-centers of the brain. These members, even after being cut off from their blood-supply, are able still to function for a short time. Unlike the brain, they are not rendered numb so suddenly through the loss of blood.

When, too, in the case of the slaughtered animal, we observe the sensitiveness of the eyelids, the mouth, the tongue, etc., it should be remembered that all these are only reflexes, all of which are possible also without the assistance of the brain. We can prove this by experimenting on a sleeping or narcotized person or animal. The facts obtained by experimentation show on the one hand, that the brain is unable to function; and, on the other, that the remaining parts of the body possess all their functions. Because of this cessation of all pain, with the Shehita cut, scientists and experts

have recognized in Sheḥita not a cruel and painful way of slaughtering, but an ideally compassionate and humane one.

Perfect "fixing" of the animal in all its parts before the Sheḥita, a flawless performance of the cutting with a flawless ḥalef (knife), by a virile, experienced Shoḥet—all of these are of paramount importance. Only the most painstaking efforts in the observance of every detail of the laws of Sheḥita can insure unobjectionable results. It is demanded by Judaism that these rules and regulations be kept up with uncompromising fidelity.

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VIII

DUTIES OF THE HEART

The Book and Its Author

BY

EDWIN COLLINS

VIII

DUTIES OF THE HEART

Baḥya's *Duties of the Heart* is quite unique among the works on ethics written by Jews, and the ethical treatises of other nations of the world.

It is not a collection of ethical principles and rules of conduct or moral maxims or reflections on religion and duty to God and man, of which there are so many in Jewish literature; nor a scientifically built up explanation of the evolution of right conduct in social life; nor a study of "What Is Justice?" nor a system based on the ideals of justice. It is no mere admonition to follow the commands of God or of the *Torah,* in regard to the conduct of the individual or the community, and not the setting up of an "Ideal State," in which right conduct is for the advantage of all.

It is, however, a complete and scientific system, based on such a love of God, as will come from study of Him, and must result in justice, and in the practical, as well as the ideal, love of man.

Baḥya's system, however, is, in a sense, a Jewish ethics, the only conceivable Jewish way of treating the science and art of human conduct, but making possible its universal acceptance, as the science and art of conduct for "all created, reasonable beings." (Kant's *"Vernünftige Wesen," Haberuim hamedaberim.*)

A view of ethics setting up "The State," or expediency, or "the happiness of the greatest number," or "justice," as the source and final aim of its ideal,

could not, in its entirety, be accepted by Jews. On the other hand, a purely Jewish system of ethics, based primarily upon the Revelation at Sinai as its sole justification, explanation and ultimate ideal, could hardly claim validity for all men.

It must not, however, be thought, that there is a Jewish ethics, a Greek ethics, a German ethics, an atheistic ethics, or a religious ethics. There can be but one ethics, just as there is only one mathematics. But the points of view from which ethical treatises are written may be, and certainly are, very different indeed. There are religious explanations of ethics, common, with variations, to Jews, Christians and Mohammedans. There is the "Ethical Society's" system of ethics which, however, is not a scientific system at all, that tries to base ethics, or moral conduct, with its grounds and motives for conduct, in the air, on the vacant place, whence "superior" people have kicked away the ladder they went up by—on something quite independent of the idea of Deity or of Revelation. There is the Ethics of Idealism, and the Ethics of Materialism. In one case, "innate ideas," and in another, experience and expediency are taken to base ethics on. Plato's theory of ideas has an ethics, or rather a way of looking at ethics, belonging to that theory of ideas, and Herbert Spencer, in his *Synthetic Philosophy,* devotes two whole volumes to *The Data of Ethics.* Kant, the great German philosopher, wrote his ethics under the title: *The Critique of Practical Reason,* and his ethics claims to be the kind of conduct and the kind of thought regulating conduct, that appeals, or would appeal, to "every reasonable being," using the words, "reasonable being" in the

sense of any existing, actual, possible or conceivable, or hypothetical living being that reasons in accordance with the laws of thought accepted by modern philosophers. Spiritual beings, *Ishim,* or *Malakhim mammash,* or "Angels," might be included among Kant's *"Vernünftige Wesen,"* and also among the "Reasoning Creatures," *Beruim Hammedabberim,* of Rabbenu Baḥya.

Kant says that: "Religion is the recognition of our duties as divine commands," but he makes morality the foundation. Baḥya goes further back. He holds that morality is what reason would discover, but its chief duty is to seek to understand the Creator, so that we realize our debt of gratitude to Him, and it becomes our delight to do His will, in thought and deed, and not merely our duty to obey, even divine commands; and so to do it, that the love of God, with all its corollaries and results, becomes a second nature.

The Author

Rabbi Baḥya ben Joseph Ibn Pakuda, the author of *The Duties of the Heart,* belongs to the most brilliant period of Jewish literature in post-Biblical times. In the middle and latter half of the eleventh century, Spain became the rallying point and radiating center of Jewish culture: religious, philosophic, and poetic; and while practically the whole of the western world was sunk in the intellectual darkness of the Middle Ages, the Jews of Spain were not only cultivating their science and developing their own spiritual and intellectual heritage, they were also preparing the way for the Renaissance, and for the reënfranchisement of western thought, by their study and dissemina-

tion, in Hebrew and Arabic translations, of the philosophy of Greece. It was the Jews of Spain who were the chief students of the so-called Arabic philosophy, and the chief instruments by which it was subsequently made effective on European culture. Lewis, in his *History of Philosophy,* says: "It was also through their translators, and their original thinkers, that the West became leavened with Greek and Oriental thought."

Among the greatest of these thinkers were Avicebron, the author of *"Fons Vitæ"* who, it is now known, was our great poet-philosopher, Ibn Gebirol (1021-1070), Moses Maimonides, Jehudah Halevi, and our Rabbi Baḥya. This last, the author of *The Duties of the Heart,* held the position in the Jewish community of "Dayan," an office which combines something of the duties of a judge in civil, religious and matrimonial causes, with those of a rabbi, authorized to answer questions on all matters of Jewish law and life, and on the application to personal, particular and exceptional cases, of the general principles found in the Bible and Talmud.

We know very little of his life, and even the exact date of his birth and the place where he held office, are not known with certainty. It is, however, safe to say, that he lived and wrote before Ibn Ezra wrote his commentary on Deuteronomy, for Ibn Ezra shows knowledge of Baḥya and his work, which must therefore have been written before 1157. As Rabbi Baḥya shows that he knew, and was perhaps to some extent indebted to, the Ihja of Gazali, which was written in 1105, this makes the earliest possible date at which the *Duties of the Heart* could have been written

some time after 1105. We therefore get the two dates, 1105 and 1157, as the terminus *a quo,* and the terminus *ad quem,* to the period within which our *Duties of the Heart* could have been written. This would more or less agree with Jellinek's opinion, that he lived in Saragossa, was born in the second half of the eleventh century, and died somewhere about the first half of the twelfth century.

He was a man of the most amiable and genial character, and though profoundly and Jewishly religious, was extremely liberal minded. He himself lays it down as a duty to learn from every one, and to perfect one's wisdom by the study of the wisdom of non-Jews, as well as Jews. His *Duties of the Heart* linked the ethical science of the West with the emotional and spiritual morality of the East. It combines, in an artistic unity, elements drawn from the philosophy and contemplative mysticism of the Arabs, from Biblical and rabbinic Judaism, and from Greek thought. By exhibiting the spiritual foundations of universal ethics and of the moral law of the Bible, in the light of pure reason, Baḥya prepared the way for finding that common ground on which all the moral religions and all the non-religious systems of morality are rooted. Rabbi Baḥya was an industrious student of all the science of his day, and he held it to be a sacred duty to gain, both by direct observation and by independent thought, a knowledge as complete as possible, of the material world and of the history of man. He believed that both every accession to our knowledge, and every strengthening of our instrument of thought must tend to deepen our admiration for the Creator, and to fit us, ever more and more thoroughly, for fulfilling the

ideal of our *raison d'être,* and, by perfecting our character, to perfect also our worldly conduct, and our relations with our fellow men; for, as it is one of the chief purposes of *The Duties of the Heart* to point out, actual conduct must find its motive within ourselves, and not in any attempted slavish obedience to externally imposed law. Therefore, we ourselves must be perfected, and brought into harmony with the Divine Author of all good, in order to enable our thoughts, our intentions, and our emotions, to make us willingly and joyously fulfill His will, and thus to benefit our fellow men individually, as well as any social organism of which we form a part. This perfection of character and knowledge of God are to be sought not only by religious contemplation, but also by the study of natural science, mathematics, anthropology, zoölogy, history and of everything showing the work of the Creator, and enabling us to understand, in part, "the operations of His hands" in the affairs of man. Baḥya teaches by his own example, as well as precept, the duty of "learning from everybody," no matter to what race or creed they may belong, no matter, even, what may be their religious opinions.

The Dayan has to apply to special and exceptional cases brought under his notice, the Jewish principles found in the Bible and *Talmud,* and the codified Common Law and Statute Law combined, so to speak, found in the *Shulḥan Aruch,* or "Prepared Table." As the *Shulḥan Aruch* had not yet been written, Rabbi Baḥya's task in applying to cases arising in everyday life, the "Statute Law" of the Bible, the "Common Law" of our sages, and the traditions handed down from Moses, was a more difficult one than that of a

Dayan of the present day. He had to have a more or less encyclopaedic knowledge of Jewish law and lore, a knowledge of human nature and of everyday affairs, and keen reasoning faculties. To be really conscientious, much skill and care were needed to recognize old things under new names, and new things under old names, to judge of thought and motives, and to decide practical questions in the spirit of the *Torah,* in a country very different, and under conditions very different, from those of the prophets, and even of the days when the *Mishnah* was being discussed by our sages.

In the course of his duties as a religious teacher and a legal expert, Rabbi Baḥya noticed that a great deal had been written about duties that are fulfilled by overt acts, in conduct "visible" to the eye, and tangible to the senses, and nothing about conduct that goes on in a man's mind and soul and heart—the true sources of his outward life—nothing about the thoughts and motives that make man's acts meritorious or evil. He saw that while there were numerous books and codes of laws and "Questions and Answers" written down about how to observe the definite commands as to what one shall do or shall not do outwardly, very little, if anything, had been written, even up to his day, on the performance of those duties and the fulfillment of those commands that have no outward sign of their fulfillment. Yet he saw that those commands in the Bible, and even those given by the promptings of natural reason in the human soul and mind, which enjoin duties to be fulfilled only in the heart and not at all by the body and its members, deal with the very source and motive force of all of man's doing, not only

making it right or wrong, according to the motive, but also making ethical conduct possible or impossible, by molding the character out of which spontaneous acts arise.

Although Hebrew literature, from the Bible onwards, is full of ethical and moral teaching, no systematic treatise on ethics had appeared among the Jews before Rabbi Baḥya wrote his *Duties of the Heart.* The *Talmud,* the *Midrashim, The Sentences of the Fathers, The Sentences of Rabbi Nathan, Masekheth Derekh Eretz,* Ibn Gebirol's *The Choice of the Pearls,* Samuel Hannagid's *The Son of Proverbs,* were all full of direct ethical teaching, but not one of these contains a scientific working out of a system of ethics based on one central thought and claiming universal validity. Baḥya complained that although there was no lack of guidance in books current in his day as to the duties of "the body and its members," by which he understood all the outward conduct of life, even honesty in dealing, deeds of charity and benevolence, and even the activities of the tongue and lips in prayer and praise, and in good or evil speaking, in telling the truth, and in lying; there was no book attempting to deal with those duties that find their fulfillment in the heart and mind. It was this fact, combined with the belief that the duties of the heart and soul and mind are even more important than those that can be fulfilled by the body, which led to his writing his great work, *The Duties of the Heart.*

Rabbi Baḥya wrote in Arabic, and the Arabic original has never yet been even printed in full. One of the two manuscripts is in the Bibliothèque Nationale,

and the other, in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Dr. Yahuda has copied, in Arabic characters, the first three "Gates" of a manuscript written in Hebrew characters, but only the "First Gate" has been published. This appears with Dr. Yahuda's *"Prolegomena zu Einer Erstmaliger Herausgabe des Kitab-al-Hidaja 'ila Farid al Qulub."* Dr. Yahuda's work has not yet been completed, so that all students are dependent upon the Hebrew translations, chiefly that by Ibn Tibbon, for knowledge of the complete work of Rabbi Baḥya. One complete German translation of this has been made by Stern, who mentions translations also into Latin, Spanish, Judeo-Spanish, Yiddish-Deutsch, and other tongues. No complete English translation has been made, although a summarized translation with an "Introduction" by Edwin Collins,[1] published in February, 1904, went through four editions, and the Rev. Dayan Hyamson published, in 1925, the "Introduction," and the "First Gate," or part of it, in the Hebrew of Ibn Tibbon, with an English translation by himself.

Summary

Rabbi Baḥya divides his work into an "Introduction" and ten sections, which he calls "Gates."

The first, "The Gate of Unity," deals with the different kinds of recognition of the Unity of God, blessed be His Name, and the recognition of this unity with a perfect heart.

The second, entitled "The Gate of Behinah," "Testing," explains the different ways of examining created beings and created things, and the abundance of God's goodness towards them. "This," he says, "is the near-

[1] Author of the present essay.

est way to clear realization of His existence and His true Being."

The Third "Gate," "The Service of God," explains in what way and by what means we can understand and fulfill the duty of accepting the service of God.

The Fourth "Gate," "The Trust in God," deals with restful, perfect faith and trust in God. "This," he says, "is needed more than all other things for him who serves God. . . . For if man does not trust in God, he trusts in some one or something else," and necessarily rejects God's Providence and serves the thing he trusts.

The Fifth "Gate," "The Unification of all our works to God," explains the duty of unifying and devoting all our works and doings to God, and a warning against hypocrisy.

The Sixth "Gate" explains the duty of humility before God, submission to Him, and the grounds and manners of this humble submission.

The Seventh "Gate" deals with "Repentance," why it is a duty, and all matters connected with it.

The Eighth "Gate" explains what Rabbi Baḥya calls "a man's keeping account with his soul before God."

The Ninth "Gate" deals with *Perishuth* or aloofness from this world, and "the benefits that we derive from it."

The Tenth "Gate" explains the aim and end of the whole work, and deals with the perfect love of God.

Wisdom God's Greatest Gift

"The greatest of the benefits that the Creator has bestowed upon his servants endowed with speech and

reason, after the gift of existence, after he had called them into being fully endowed with powers of perception and intelligence," says Rabbi Baḥya, quite early in the "Introduction" to his book, "is the gift of wisdom, which is the life of their spirit, the light of their intelligence, and that which brings them to the favor of God and rescues them from his anger in this world and in the world to come. As it is said, 'For the Eternal giveth wisdom from His mouth, knowledge and understanding' (Proverbs ii), and 'Surely there is a spirit in man, and the spirit of the Almighty causeth them to understand' " (Job xxxii. 8).

Rabbi Baḥya divides wisdom into three divisions.

> The first, the wisdom concerning all formed things, or nature-wisdom, that deals with matter and its accidents. The second division is the helping form of wisdom, or ministering wisdom (called by some the wisdom of correction, or warning, and admonition that leads to moral culture and to all forms of self-restraint and exactitude in art and life), and this is the wisdom that deals with numbers and measures and astronomy, and the art and science of music and mathematical theories. And the third division is called in Arabic, *aleleem aldai,* and this is the wisdom that deals with divine things, the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of His *Torah,* and of such other forms of intelligence and reason as deal with the soul, the mind, spiritual beings, angels.
>
> And all these kinds of wisdom, according to all their divisions or in all their varieties of meanings and purposes, are gates which the Creator has opened to reasoning beings to enable them to reach His *Torah* and the world. But some of these forms of wisdom are more necessary for the understanding of the laws of God,

and some of them are more necessary for the enjoyment of this world and for worldly profit.

After explaining some of the advantages of the lower forms of wisdom, the two kinds that we should call today (a) natural and physical sciences, and (b) abstract sciences, aesthetics, art, and arts and crafts, he goes on to say: "The form of wisdom that is most necessary for *Torah* is the highest form of wisdom, that which deals with Deity; and we are bound to learn it in order that we may be able to understand and to attain to full comprehension of our *Torah;* but we must not on any account study this highest wisdom for the sake of worldly benefit or profit."

Why Baḥya Wrote His Book

Some further extracts from the "Introduction," will show more clearly what Rabbi Baḥya meant by the Duties of the Heart, as distinguished from the "duties of the members," and how he came to write the book:

> And when the obligation of the hidden wisdom became clear to me from reason, Scripture, and tradition, I said: "Perhaps this is a kind of commandments which are not obligatory upon us at all times and in all places, like the Year of Release, the Jubilee and the Offering; but when I looked into the matter I found that they are obligatory upon us continuously, all our days, and without intermission, and that we have no excuse for leaving them undone at any time. Such, for instance, are the recognition of the Unity of God and the full understanding of it in our hearts, and the service of Him within the hidden parts of our being, and the duty of fearing and loving Him, so that we grow pale with longing [2] to fulfill all the commands that are obligatory

[2] *Nichsaf.*

upon us, as it is written, "My longing endeavor is that my ways may be directed to observe Thy statutes" (Psalm cxix. 5), and that we should be resting in perfect trust upon Him and given over to Him, as it is said (Psalm lxii. 9), "Trust ye in Him at every time, pour out your hearts before Him;" "and to remove hatred and envy, and vengeful feeling from our hearts, and that we should separate ourselves from the superfluous things of the world which would hinder us from the service of God; for all this is obligatory for us continuously at every time and in every place and in every hour and in every second and in every relation of life and in regard to every matter, so long as our reason and our spiritual soul are within us.

This may be compared to the case of a servant whose master commanded him to do two kinds of work, the one in his house, and the other in the fields, such as the labor of the soil, and to work at it at specially stated times, and at specially stated and specified hours. If these times passed, and if it were found that this work could not be done on account of some matter that hindered it, then the obligation of this work outside the house was removed from him, but the obligation to the work that he had been commanded to do in his master's house was not removed from him all the days that he remained in the house and served his master when there was no unavoidable hindrance that prevented him from doing this work. This obligation was continuously upon him, whithersoever he turned. And thus it is with the commandments of the heart, which are incumbent upon us. There is no excuse for throwing them off, and nothing hinders from performing them except the loving of this world, and not being sufficiently intelligent to understand the purpose of our Creator, as it is said (Isaiah v. 12), "And the harp and the viol and the tabarette and the flute and wine, are

in their feasts, but to the work of the Eternal they do not look, nor have they seen the operation of His hands."

Then I said, "Perhaps this kind of commandment is the kind that does not give birth to other duties, and therefore people have neglected them." But when I investigated their number and the various kinds of them, I found them very numerous indeed, not only in themselves, but in the duties of which they were the cause and source, until I came to think of what David, on him be peace, said (Psalm cxix. 96): "To every striving I have seen an end, but Thy commandment is very wide indeed." This saying of the Psalmist must refer to the duties of the heart, for the duties of the bodily members have a very definite, known number; as, for example, we speak of the 613 *Mitzvoth*. Only the commandments of the heart are so very numerous that there is no number to their family and to those duties to which they gave birth. Then I said, "Perhaps they are very obvious and known to all men, so that every one is attached to them to such an extent that it is quite unnecessary to compile an account of them in a book." But I looked at the habits and customs of mankind in many generations, which are recorded in books, and I found that they were very far removed from this species of the commandments and sacred duties. Only, indeed, the *Perushim*, the specially distinguished, pious men, were heedful of these commandments, and this to such an extent that there is a special record of them.

But as for the rest of mankind, they (the *Perushim*) had constantly to remind and warn concerning these duties. How much more so is this the case with men of our time, who even neglect the philosophy of the commandments and religious duties that belong to the body and its members, not to speak of their absolute neglect of the duties of the heart.

Baḥya further shows that it is not sufficient fulfillment of the chief duties of the heart simply to accept what tradition or Scripture teaches about them. We must by our own intellectual and emotional effort fulfill these duties for ourselves. For instance, he says that it is not good merely to declare our belief in the Unity of God, unless we study to realize and feel what Unity, when applied to the Creator, really means, and he quotes Deuteronomy vi. 39, in support of this: "And thou shalt really know this day and bring back the thought to thy heart." And so, he goes on to explain, it is with the other commandments concerning the heart.

After Rabbi Baḥya has explained the insufficiency of even a careful study of mere material duties, he says:

> And it became perfectly clear to me that all the roots of works which a man must carry out to please God are founded in purity of heart and translucent clearness of one's innermost thought. If anything impairs the purity of the intention with which a thing is done, the works themselves become unacceptable to God, even if they be good works that are continuously and repeatedly done.

He supports this statement with Biblical passages which, used in this context, receive an interpretation not usually given to them: "Also when you multiply your prayers very much" (Isaiah v. 5). "Wash you, make yourselves pure, and remove the evil of your doings," i.e., that which makes your doings evil. (Deuteronomy xxx. 14): "For this word is very near to thee, it is in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it," and the Scripture says (Numbers xv.

39), "And you shall not turn aside after your own heart, and after your own eyes," and (Micah vi. 6), "With what can I come near the Lord, and approach the most high God? Shall I approach Him with sacrifice?" and the answer given is, "He has shown thee, O man! what is good, and what doth the Eternal require from thee . . ." "And it is necessary," continues Rabbi Baḥya, "that thou shouldst know that the intention and benefit of the duties of the heart is that our outward actions, and our inner thoughts and feelings, shall be equal and bear equal testimony to our service of God." After dealing with this subject at some length, and with many Biblical quotations, he says: "The intention to do what is right, and fulfill the commands of God is equal in His sight to their actual fulfillment." He quotes the message to David when told that he himself should not build a temple: "Because it was in thy heart, to build a house to my name" (1st Samuel, xv. 22). And further (Malachi iii. 16), "And he said, 'Then those that feared the Lord spoke one to another, and the Lord heard it, and a book of memorial was written before Him, of those that feared the Lord, and that *thought* His Name' (*Ḥosheve*), and our sages say in regard to this passage: 'Even he who thought, and desired, to do a *mitzvah,* and was prevented, and did not do it, the Scripture reckons it to him as if he had fulfilled it.' "

II

After a chapter devoted to a detailed proof of the Unity of God, based upon close reasoning from the observation of nature as well as from philosophic and religious considerations, Rabbi Baḥya devotes a chap-

ter to what he calls *Behinah,* or testing, or proving. Here he deals with critical contemplation of the wisdom of the Creator, manifested in the work of creation.

The Service of God

Ethics Based on Gratitude

From this chapter on Behinah, he goes on to consider, "What is the Service of God?" and how the obligation to that service, which includes all our duties to our fellow creatures, in fact, all ethics, is based upon an endless debt of gratitude to the Creator, not merely for the good we enjoy, but for God's will to benefit us. He shows that gratitude is due even to men only in so far as they intended good for us, and that nearly all human beneficence has some admixture of selfish motive, while the boundless beneficence of God is absolutely unearned and, if one dare use the word, "disinterested."

According to Rabbi Baḥya, the whole of conduct is within the domain of ethics. This is in harmony both with the *Torah,* and with modern, philosophic theories of ethics. Every act that one does or leaves undone, whether with regard to our own life, or to that of others, must have consequences: consequences for the doer, and consequences for the community. Our smallest deeds, and the smallest thoughts to which we give expression, and as certainly, though less obviously, the passing of a thought through the mind, or even the experience of a transient emotion, affects our character, and leaves an influence affecting, in some way, *all* our future acts, thoughts and feelings. The Jewish *Torah,* even apart from any theory of ethics, teaches that every act, from rising out of one's bed in the

morning, to falling asleep at night, must be governed by the principles of the *Torah,* and by consideration for the will of God. Thus, in fact, as in the theory of Orthodox Judaism, Rabbi Baḥya's views of ethics as a science of conduct, anticipate one essential point in the teachings of Herbert Spencer, whose ethical principles have a different and, in part, fallacious source and aim.

Our Being Conditions Our Doing

Rabbi Baḥya also shows that conduct in all its manifestations is the outcome of what we *are.* We do not act from the immediate impulse of thought or reasoning or principles; we act, in the moral sphere, just as in the physical. Automatic movements result from the impulse of emotion, from formed habit, and in response to nervous stimuli, as reflex actions, in response to stimuli from without. If a man is about to hit you in the eye, you do not meditate on what you shall do to evade the blow; your eyelid closes automatically, you recoil automatically, and a whole set of complex muscular movements takes place without any conscious volition on your part. So it is, for instance, with acts of *gemilut hasadim,* "the bestowal of loving-kindnesses," sudden movements, by which, in some cases, we risk our own lives in saving that of another. Our sympathetic glance at some one else in pain, the impulse to give charity to the poor, to succor the fallen and to obey such a command as, "If thy neighbor's ox or his ass falls down by the way, thou shalt surely help him to raise it up again"—such actions follow not immediately after careful thought as to whether they are right or wrong, necessary or unnecessary, but in

response to impulses within ourselves. Therefore, the way to ensure conduct in accordance with ethics, is to build up a character in unison with the will of God.

Yiḥud Hamaase

The Unification of Works

In regard to the explanation of the duty to have all our work unified, and solely devoted to God, and done for His sake alone, and to warn us against hypocrisy, Rabbi Baḥya wrote the Fifth Gate, *"Yihud Hamaase."* He distinguishes between (a) works done necessarily before mankind, and the duties of the bodily members fulfilled to win God's favor, but in regard to which some ulterior aim other than seeking God's favor is possible, such as the intention of appearing good before men, to gain honor and praise; and (b) "those other works, the duties of the heart, in the fulfillment of which there is no danger of hypocrisy, since the doing of these inner good works or the neglect of them, cannot be seen by the sons of men, and therefore cannot bring honor and praise to him who fulfills them, for the only *One* that looks at them is the Creator, blessed be He, alone." As it is said (Jeremiah xvii. 1), "I, the Eternal, search out the heart, and the reins," and (Deuteronomy xxx), "The secret things belong to the Eternal, our God, and the revealed to us, so that we may fulfill all the words of the *Torah*."

Here is another passage from the section *Yihud Hamaase,* showing its relation to the "Duties of the Heart" as such, including the formation and testing of the motives and the thoughts of the heart, rather than mere overt acts as they stand and are seen.

After a well-reasoned and, in part, humorous expla-

nation of the dilemma of the man who does not wish to avoid doing good actions, out of fear that he should be seen doing them, and at the same time does not wish to do good actions even apparently for the sake of being seen doing good, and who says, "How can I flee from the little fire into the greater fire?" Baḥya goes on:

> It might well be proper to hide from among my works all which in their perfect doing and their completion cannot be accomplished without the knowledge of the sons of men; but how, then, can I say prayers with the congregation? how command people to do what is good? how show them what is evil? How is it possible to teach wisdom and philosophy and to do acts of loving kindness, and the like? Are they not among the things that we are warned *not* to leave undone and not to leave off doing, lest we be suspected of hypocrisy? Certainly it is my duty to do all these things *leshem Shamayim,* for the honor of God, and if the sons of men praise me for it, or honor me on account of it, this cannot hurt me, or in the least diminish my merit, because it was not my intention, in doing these things, to bring praise or honor upon myself. But it has already been said, adds Baḥya, that when thou doest works that the sons of men know of, and thou wishest to stand by the purity of thy heart, then test thine own soul in regard to it in two aspects. One is that thou mayest know what kind of requital or reward thou art hoping for in this work, and from whom thou hopest for this requital. If it is from God, then this work is perfect, but if it is from any one or any being or thing but Him, then it is not perfect. And the second is that thou mayest know from thine own soul that if thou wast quite alone, whether thou wouldst have done this work in exactly the same way and in the same measure. And if it is

clear to thee that this is so, then thy work is perfect before God, then go on with such work, and multiply it as much as possible. If, however, it is less than this, then even leave off doing this work until thine heart has purified itself in the sight of Heaven.

Keeping Account with One's Own Soul

Eighth Gate

Immediately following the chapter on repentance, or as it should better be called, the "coming back" to God, comes a remarkable chapter on what Rabbi Baḥya calls, "keeping account with one's own soul," in its relation with God.

"In order," he says, "to know in what way *teshuvah* is necessary and possible, one must keep an account and examine one's obligations and failings in meeting them, and reckon up how great they are and how one can make up for failings and bring oneself back into the right way." Here Baḥya quotes Psalm cxiv, "I have calculated my ways, and I will bring back my foot (or my steps), to Thy testimonies." To understand the applicability of this quotation, interpreting *Ḥashav* in the sense of to estimate, to weigh, one must, as is often the case with Rabbi Baḥya, give a meaning to one of the chief words different from that commonly accepted, and here, as usual, it is the nearest to the primary root-meaning. *Ḥashav* is to "think" but also to "calculate," to "reckon," and to *"esteem,"* and "value" (in both senses of the English word), also to "premeditate." Thus the passage quoted would read, paraphrased, "I have thought deeply on my ways, reckoned them up, premeditated them, estimated the value of every step taken, and thought, in advance,

of the steps I have to take, so that I may be able to bring back my footsteps into the paths that lead to Thy testimonies." All these apparently heterogeneous thoughts are suggested or connoted by the Hebrew word *Ḥashav* but only a genius like Rabbi Baḥya would have dreamt of using this verse of the Psalms to suggest what he has to say in this chapter on *ḥeshbon,* or the reckoning of a man with his own soul towards God.[3] Any one who thoroughly understands all that *ḥasḥav* can suggest, and that the causative of *shuv, ḥashiv,* means to "bring back," and sees its connection with wandering away from the paths of God, being led back in repentance, and the suggested ideas underlying "Thy testimonies," will at once get a glimpse of all that Baḥya will explain in this chapter.

> This keeping account with the soul, says Rabbi Baḥya, has six subjects connected with it:—The first, what is meant by keeping account with the soul; the second, whether such account keeping is the same in the case of all men or not; the third, in how many ways must a man keep account with his own soul; the fourth, what advantage is to be gained by such account keeping; the fifth, as to whether such a searching or reckoning with the soul is continuously obligatory upon man, or not.

Without attempting to follow Baḥya right through this chapter, I may just mention that, with regard to the third question, in how many ways a man should keep account with his own soul, Rabbi Baḥya says:

> There are very many ways, but I shall mention only thirty of them, the first being, that when a man makes

[3] It will be well to remember that one sense of *Ḥashav* is to *premeditate,* to *design* or *plan.*

himself think on the subject of his very self, when he calculates at first his coming into existence and his emergence from non-existence into existence, and from nothingness to being, without any previous or antecedent worth or profitableness or merit that preceded this coming into existence, only the loving kindness of God and His goodness, and His free-willed bestowal, and when he sees, with his reason, that he has been esteemed in this matter and valued and raised in rank and degree above the cattle and the vegetable kingdom and the mineral kingdom; then he will lay upon himself the debt and obligation of giving unlimited acknowledgement and thanks to his Creator, blessed be He. This matter may be compared to the following parable: Let one represent to himself that it is as if his mother, when he was but a suckling child, had thrown him away from her into the highroad, and some man, passing by, had seen him and taken pity upon him and gathered him to himself and taken him into his house and undertaken to bring him up and educate him and nurture him right up to the time when he was big and intelligent, how would he have been indebted? and how would it have been incumbent upon him to run and hasten to do the pleasure of the man who picked him up?

In such manner, and for similar reason, but much more so, the man who really reckons with his own soul, will feel himself indebted to God.

This is enough to show the lines on which Rabbi Baḥya proceeds, with regard to the *ḥeshbon hanefesh*.

"Perishuth"—Separateness and the Love of God

The final division of Baḥya's *Duties of the Heart* deals with the love of the Eternal. Only in order to remove all hindrances to the attainment of this perfect

love of God, and certainly not with any idea of pleasing God by self-mortification, Rabbi Baḥya advocates so-called asceticism.

Asceticism—contempt for the things of this world and its pleasures—is not in any sense an aim and end with Baḥya. On the contrary, throughout his book, as in those of all the great Jewish ethical and religious writers, joy in all God's works, admiration of nature, study of the arts, the perfecting of one's bodily faculties—in short, the living of a full and joyous life, are praised and recommended. But, as it is easy when enjoying the good things of this world, to become so absorbed in their enjoyment as to forget the Giver, therefore one must not allow himself to love these things in excess. Also, he must guard against pride in his own powers, and against thinking that he is the author of his own happiness. He must not say, "My power and my hand hath gotten me all this wealth." He must not even say, "My goodness has made me deserve all these good things." As soon as he does this, he has ceased to "walk humbly before God." He is even, in a sense, worshiping strange gods; the powers of nature, his own physical and mental strength, or his own virtues. It is to prevent the possibility of such a form of idolatry, that Baḥya recommends *perishuth* or "separateness." It is not because joy in good things is bad, but because joy in God, and God alone, is better.

Here is an extract from the Ninth Gate, *Perishuth, Perek* 3.

> Separation, or withdrawal from the world, can be for one of two reasons: One, *Torah* or religion, and the

other, the world itself. Those that are withdrawn from the world by reason of being given over to *Torah,* or religion, are the men that one may call the true *perushim,* and they are of three classes: First, those that go to the uttermost boundary of asceticism, and aim at being like creatures of pure spirit. They forsake all that would seem to hinder them from closeness to the Deity. They flee from inhabited places to wildernesses and deserts and high mountain tops, to places where there is no brotherhood and no fellowship: they eat what they find: grass and herbs from the fields, and leaves of trees; and dress in old, worn-out garments, and rough wool; and shelter themselves in rocks; and in their fear of God they banish absolutely all fear of any created being, and they try to satisfy their craving for perfect love of God by casting out all thought of love of the sons of men, and they refuse to have any hope for any good that man can do unto them. This class of ascetic is far from the classes of those who take the "religious middle way," and they are by no means in agreement with the teaching of our *Torah,* because these extreme ascetics forsake and neglect entirely the real meaning of their worldly existence. And it is not in accordance with the religion of the *Torah* or its laws, to forsake the habitable or inhabited world entirely, as we have learnt from the Scriptures (see Isaiah xlv), "Not for an empty chaos did He create it, but to be inhabited He formed it."

The second class of those who practice *perishuth,* is that of the moderate men who take the "middle course." They have rejected all the superfluities of the world entirely, and they think to tame their desires and appetites for these things.

After dealing with the details of this second form of asceticism, Rabbi Baḥya ultimately goes on to de-

scribe the kind of "separation" from the world, which he considers is according to our *Torah* (*Perek* 5 of Gate Nine).

> The kind of separateness, he says, that is in accordance with our *Torah,* has three aspects. The first of them, in regard to our occupations with the sons of men and our association with them, the second, in regard to all our doings when we confine ourselves to the activities of our bodily senses, and our visible members, and the third with regard to our doings when we are shut up, as it were, within ourselves, and occupied with that which is within us, and our qualities and calculations, and the meditations that are hidden in our hearts and all that relates to our good thoughts and our evil thoughts, and I am explaining all this in brief, according to my ability, with the help of God.
>
> But the way of the separateness which is suitable for us in our associations with the sons of men, consists in smiling and friendly faces, to receive all men, the showing of joy when we meet them, and further the showing of mercy and the doing of gracious acts, and having compassion upon them, together with the removal of trouble or weariness from them, speaking kindly, and in praise of them, doing acts of charity and loving kindness to them, and that we do not hope to get any profit or benefit from them, and that we deny ourselves anything that is in their possession, and that we should be helpful to them in promoting their religious and worldly good, and that we should teach them the right way that is pleasing to God, and that we should bear their rough words, and that we should pour out our meditations, and all that springs up in our spirits that we long to utter, of praise, or commendation, prayer or complaint before God and not before them. It also includes the withholding ourselves from their festive meals and drinking feasts and their merry-making, to-

gether with a guarding of ourselves against all that might lead to rebellion against the will of God in our associations with men, and that might bring us beyond the bounds of decency and modesty, and against any form of immorality and the like.

However, the part of separateness which *is* proper to us, in its second aspect (that aspect which concerns us only in our physical senses) is again divided into two sections. One of them is the things that are forbidden to us, the *mitzvoth lo thaase,* the negative commandments, and the second, things that are permitted to us. That is, all kinds of permitted enjoyments are included. Each of these two classes falls again into three subdivisions. For all that is forbidden to us is included in one of three orders. It is either something that it is in nature that one might long for but that is forbidden to us, like sexual immorality, robbery, excessive eating and drinking; or it is something that one does not long for, nor naturally hate, such as dressing in garments of mixed linen and woolen, mixing of different species in planting things, eating of meat and milk together, the prohibited kind of fat (*ḥelev*) and many like things; or it is something that is revolting, which nature would make us hate, eating of the flesh of animals that have died naturally, the eating of blood, and the eating of different species of living creatures, in the consumption of which one would not take pleasure even if eating them were permitted, such as creeping things; and it is proper for thee, my brother, that thou shouldst guard thy soul in separateness from everything that God has commanded thee to keep thyself apart from, until thou reachest such a point in feeling disgust and dislike for the kind of pleasures that are forbidden, that finally it becomes second nature to thee, and thou hast a natural distaste for all things that we have been commanded to keep away from.

Rabbi Baḥya goes on to show how this kind of discipline of one's appetite gradually makes the withholding of oneself from very many of the forbidden things, cease being a deprivation and gradually to become second nature. He shows also that with regard to excess in the enjoyment of things that are allowed, the habits formed from this kind of self-discipline, make the keeping within bounds pleasant rather than painful.

It will be seen from the above that real asceticism, either in ideal or in practice, was never a part of Rabbi Baḥya's scheme. All the characteristics of what Rabbi Baḥya describes as *"perishuth,"* which is in harmony with the *Torah,* are really characteristics of a man who aims at serving humanity, at keeping his own body and soul pure, and at living in loving sympathy with all God's creatures. The only exceptional self-denials incumbent upon him are involved in keeping the biblical law, and a following after the highest ideals of social and ethical conduct.

III

The Love of God

This is how Rabbi Baḥya describes the idea of love of God: "It is the extreme longing of the soul, growing faint with longing, and turning, of itself, to the Creator, in order that it may cleave to His highest Light, and this is that the soul, being pure spirit, inclines to that which is most akin to it among spiritual beings, and makes itself distant from those material beings that are, in nature, its opposites." This perfect love of God, and yearning to be in perfect harmony with Him, and with His will, Rabbi Baḥya tries to prove to be

quite within the bounds of possibility and, when it is attained, to be the source of spiritual, mental and moral perfection.

Rabbi Baḥya, in his Ethics, absolutely negatives the idea that rewards or punishments are necessary as a sanction to virtue, for throughout his book he describes abstaining from sin because of fear of its consequences in this world or the next, as contrary to, or undermining, each of the motives to virtue that he recommends, and by which he explains the ultimate validity of the Ethics of love and gratitude. He actually includes the fear of God, in the sense of fear of punishment for sin, among the hindrances to that love of God which would render sin impossible.

I shall quote the passages in which he describes two kinds of "fear of God," and it is significant that he differentiates these two kinds of fear, or awe, immediately after quoting the passage from Ex. xx. 20, where Moses says: "Be not frightened, for it is in order that awe, and reverential fear of Him may be constantly before your faces, so that you sin not." [4] Rabbi Baḥya says:

> Fear is of two kinds. One of them is the fear of His punishment, and His trials, and this is one's fear of how He (God) can pain him and punish him, so that if he were secure against being pained, he would neither fear nor serve God. And concerning this kind of fear, our sages say, "It makes it very doubtful in the case of one's doings, whether they spring from love or terror." (Page 449 middle, sixth section.) Such a man is, by reason of his limitations, far below the rank of those

[4] I have rendered this freely, according to the real meaning of the verse, obviously so understood by Baḥya, showing that both kinds of "yir'ah," fear, were already explained by Moses.

who can be called "God-fearing," and this is what we are warned against by our sages when they say, "Be ye not like servants who serve the Master, in order to receive reward, etc."; and one of the pious has said, "I should be ashamed before God if I served Him because of the anticipation of reward or punishment, for I should be like a wicked servant, who, if he is frightened or has hopes, does his work and when he is not in fear, or is hoping for no reward, leaves his work undone, but I will serve Him only because it is proper for me to do so."

And the second kind of fear is awe and reverence, at His glory, His exaltation, and the greatness of His power, and such an awe and reverence, once felt, never departs from a man, and such an awe never departs from him all the days of his life. And this is the highest degree that can be attained in the "fear of God." He who fears God in this way will neither love nor fear anything or any one but the Creator. As one of the *Ḥassidim* relates of one of those who feared God, that when he was found sleeping in the wilderness, and they said to him, "Are you not afraid of lions that you should sleep in a place like this?" he answered, "I should be ashamed before God to have any fear, except the fear of Him." Of those who fear God in this higher and better sense, it can be said with truth that it is a matter of indifference to them if human beings praise or blame them when it is a question of doing the will of the Creator, blessed be He, and when they are commanded by Him to do good, or to refrain from evil.

Such a love of God, therefore, when it has become a part of the character, is so inevitable a source of right conduct that, in defense of Rabbi Baḥya's theory of Ethics, we have a full answer to the argument brought forward by Herbert Spencer in the introduc-

tion to his Ethics, that a non-religious basis for ethics is imperatively needed if the fear of punishment and the hope of Heavenly rewards become too weakened to preserve virtue. The motive of love or the impulse from within oneself, is a far stronger restraint from evil and incentive to good conduct, than even any possible reasoned arguments in favor of, or against, desirable or undesirable conduct.

It must not be forgotten that, although in a short summary such as I am giving, it is impossible even to outline properly a complete system of ethics, Rabbi Baḥya's *Duties of the Heart* is such an ethical work. It is not like the *Shulhan Aruch,* a digest of laws to regulate conduct, religious or ethical, nor even like "The Strong Hand," the *Yad Hahazakah* by Maimonides, a system of Jewish religious thought and practice, starting from the recognition of God as the Creator, but it is a clear and organized statement of the foundation of ethical conduct on character, and its being cultivated and perfected in the inner laboratory of the human soul. So that the expression of the soul itself, whether in thought, in speech, or in overt act, in eating, drinking, working, sleeping, social life, intercourse with wise men, or withdrawal into solitude, is solely the result of being in a constant state of loving God, and sympathy with His Will.

This is the only systematic work on ethics written from the Jewish, Christian, or other purely religious point of view, and is an artistic unity, starting from, and leading back to, the one idea finally dealt with in the chapter on the Love of God. Rabbi Baḥya's Ethics, therefore, can never be out of date or unnecessary. Some of the arguments he uses may have been

fixed on a temporary scaffolding of now out of date science; but the design and the central thought are, in the main, of permanent value, truth and beauty.

Finally, then, Rabbi Baḥya's message is none the less important and needed because, as he shows, most of it could have been reached by reason, and the rest lies on the surface of the whole Bible for "all that run to read," and is summed up in the words of the prophet Samuel: "Man looketh to the outward appearance, the Lord looketh at the heart." As we have seen in the early sections, Rabbi Baḥya begins by proving by what looks like *Midrashic* interpretation, but is really *Peshat* (the simple, direct sense) that the "Hear, O Israel," and the Ten Commandments, start with commands that can be fulfilled only in the heart and soul. He shows, throughout his book, that outward conduct, the conduct expressed in acts and visible to man, not only is less important than the conduct within our own souls, which none but God can see, but also cannot be perfectly and consistently performed except as the result of fulfilling the duties of the heart. Even the declaration of the Unity of God is meaningless to those who do not devote thought and emotion to realizing all that "Unity" and "God" mean and imply. Remember that even the prohibition of murder and the culpability of the manslayer, depend entirely on the feelings, thoughts, and premeditations of the heart. The quotations from "Holy Writ," that Rabbi Baḥya has given in support of his views, in his introduction and throughout his book, might be taken as all sufficient, but it may be worth while in showing how completely in accordance with Scripture is his theory, to go back to the history of Abraham. Here we are told

that Abraham had faith in God, firm faith, even against apparent probability and Nature, and "that God accounted it to him as righteousness." I may also quote a passage, which I do not think is generally understood, from the second section of the *Shema'*: "Be guarded for yourselves lest your heart seduce you, and you turn aside and serve other gods." The usual translation of this passage, "Lest your heart *be* deceived," squares neither with grammar nor with the obvious intention. "Lest your heart *be* deceived," would be, in Hebrew, *Pen yiphte levavkhem* (*niphal*), instead of *yiphte* (*Kal*), exactly the same as the word used in the sentence, "If a man entice a maid," so that even in this second paragraph of *Shema'*, the necessity of having a pure and good heart that will not mislead *us* in our conduct, is insisted on twice a day by every Israelite, and connected with the prohibition of the greatest sin of all sins, the worship of other gods, which also is a sin committed in the heart. How important this is in Ethics, I may again point out by showing that even if a man makes a god of justice, of honesty, or of any of the virtues which God has created, and worships it instead of the Creator, he may be led, by this *abodah zarah,* false worship. into all kinds of sin. Obedience to commandments not to "bear a grudge," not to "covet anything that is one's neighbor's," not to "harden one's heart against one's poor brother," who asks for a loan just before the "Year of Release," and the doing of innumerable other right actions, can be known only by Him Who says, "I, the Eternal, do search out the heart and try the inward parts." Our spiritual souls illumine our conduct before the eyes of God, as it is said

in Prov. xx, 27, "The lamp of God is the spiritual soul of the earthman. It searcheth out all the inward chambers of the body." In Ps. xxxiv, the Psalmist tells us that God is "near to the broken-hearted and will save those of contrite spirit."

Throughout the *Torah* and the Prophets, return from sin to virtue is typified by what is called "circumcision of the heart," and when the Prophet Micah sums up all that God requires of man, he does so in these words: "Do justice, love mercy and loving kindness, and walk humbly before God," so that two out of three of the main requisites are among the "duties of the heart": love of mercy, and humility before God.

It is in this insistence on the fact that the duties that can be performed only in the secret recesses of our own hearts and souls, hidden from all mankind, and visible only to God, are of supreme importance, above all else, that Rabbi Baḥya's treatise was, at the time he wrote it, and has remained to this day, a unique work on religion, natural and revealed, quite apart from its uniqueness as a work in the domain of philosophy, and what Kant calls "practical reason."

IX

SCIENTIFIC ASPECTS OF THE JEWISH DIETARY LAWS

BY

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IX

THE JEWISH DIETARY LAWS

Introduction

The Dietary Laws, important among the fundamental laws of Judaism, are responsible to a considerable degree for the spiritual preservation of the Jewish people, and, in a like measure, for the hygienic development which, in the life of the Jew, has proved to be of remarkable combative resistance to various diseases. These laws, based on injunctions and ordinances found in the *Torah She-bi-Kethab,* the written law of the Bible, are made known in their practical details only through the *Torah She-be-al-peh,* the Oral Law—the traditional interpretation of the original ordinances. To safeguard them against the onslaughts of time, later rabbinical authorities, as the occasions demanded, have added amplifications and modifications.

It is the purpose of this paper to present, in a general way, the nature and the significance of these laws as applied to the life of the Jew; to discuss briefly some of the problems to which, at the present time, their observance has given rise; to stimulate the interest of the inquiring Jew who is but superficially acquainted with traditional Judaism; to inform those occasional non-Jews interested in the subject, curious concerning it, or both.

It may be helpful, in considering the subject, to

divide it into three parts: the first—a brief descriptive classification of the various dietary laws; the second—a constructive endeavor towards the appreciation of the usefulness and significance of these laws; the third—a discussion of some practical problems involved in the observance of them.

It is interesting to observe that the laws concerning forbidden foods do not appear until the Post Noahidic era of the Bible—Genesis, chapter ix. 3—when dispensation relative to animal food was first granted to man. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch offers lucid explanation of that passage in his illuminating commentary, as follows: "Before the flood, according to the teachings of the wise men, and in agreement with geological hypothesis, there was a greater intensity of temperature and a surer stability to it. And that is why there was a sufficiently luxuriant supply of vegetation to provide an adequate abundance of nutrient food from the plant world, for the needs of man. But, with the changed conditions following the flood—the abrupt changes of seasons and climates, a more rapid acceleration of biological processes, the shorter span of life of man, a 'faster life'—this combination of reasons and their concomitant influences, to which man had to accommodate himself, may have been responsible for rendering animal food more desirable, if not absolutely necessary, than the earlier vegetable diet." While the Torah recommends the enjoyment of animal food on holidays and on other joyous occasions, it neither encourages it as a regular diet, nor does it encourage the eating of vegetable foods. The assumption, then, is that the choice of these foods is left to

man according to his preference. Nevertheless, certain restrictions had to be laid down by the Bible as a fortification against abuse of the laws permitting animal food.

The Jewish dietary laws resolve themselves conveniently into five groups, as follows:

1. Regulations which concern themselves with forbidden animals not to be used as food under any circumstances.
2. Regulations restricting the eating of certain portions of those animals which are otherwise permissible.
3. Regulations dealing with conditions under which even permissible animal foods must be prepared.
4. Regulations pertaining to unlawful mixtures or combinations of foods which may not be eaten.
5. Regulations relative to foods which are forbidden principally on purely hygienic grounds.

I

Forbidden Animals

Concerning the forbidden animals, those which are considered unfit for food, and the eating of which is prohibited, the Pentateuch (in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy) describes them fully, as follows:

> And the Lord spoke unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them: Speak unto the children of Israel, saying:
>
> These are the living things which ye may eat among all the beasts that are on the earth. Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is wholly cloven footed, and cheweth the cud, are among the beasts that ye may eat.
>
> Nevertheless, these shall ye not eat of them that

> only chew the cud, or of them that only part the hoof: the camel, because he cheweth the cud but parteth not the hoof, he is unclean to you. And the rock-badger, because he cheweth the cud but parteth not the hoof, he is unclean unto you. And the hare, because he cheweth the cud but parteth not the hoof, he is unclean unto you.

It is interesting to observe that those foods which are not permitted are altogether of animal origin, in contradistinction to the fact that Holy Writ deals with both permissible and unpermissible mammalia, birds, fishes, amphibians, insects, and worms—of all species of living things, in fact.

Of the higher animals, mammalia, those that are permitted for food are differentiated from those that are unpermitted by the distinguishing characteristics that they are cloven-hoofed and chew the cud.

Holy Writ indicates twenty-five varieties of birds, unpermitted—those that are unclean and unfit for food.

Of the fishes that are permitted for food are those only that have fins and scales.

Of amphibians, insects and worms, none, according to the present Jewish practice, is permitted for food. Moreover, in accordance with the text, not only the animals and the other creatures which do not conform with the required characteristics, are prohibited as food, but all of their by-products come under the restriction as well. Hence, neither the eggs nor the milk, nor the other secretions of these creatures are permitted for food. The few exceptions to this rule—of which the bees' honey is one—are discussed fully in the Jewish Codices. The subject is too comprehensive for great detail at this time.

II

Forbidden Portions

It should be noted, furthermore, that even in the case of those animals which are permitted for food, there are certain portions, nevertheless, which, according to the Jewish Law, may not be eaten, under any circumstances. Chief among these is—blood. According to the injunction of the Torah, blood of the higher animals—cattle and birds—is not permitted for food because it is the physical essence of life.

Fish blood does not belong in this class; hence it is permissible for food.

Because of the prohibition against blood eating, all animals of which the meat is used in Jewish households, and that eaten by Jews anywhere, must be killed according to the prescribed ritual of Sheḥita, which provides for the freely unchecked venting of the blood. Then, before it is cooked, it is "soaked" in a vessel of water a half hour, "salted" for an hour after that, and thoroughly washed from the salt before it is considered to have dissolved out whatever blood, after the slaughtering, may have remained in the meat.

Another unpermitted portion of the body of the animal is *ḥelev*—certain kinds of fat found in it. These are described, in detail, in the laws pertaining to the subject. The Biblical Jewish Law proves the (hygienic) importance of the need of differentiating between two kinds of fat found in the bodies of mammalia—the one that may be eaten; the other that may not be eaten.

There are other portions of the body of the animal

which are not permissible for food, but these are of minor importance and will not be dealt with in detail, at this time.

III

Conditions Under Which Certain Animal Foods Are Permissible

The Bible sanctions the eating of animal food only when such animals have been slaughtered as prescribed by the Jewish ritual. But these animals, even if they be of the permitted variety, if they die a natural death, or, if they have been killed in any other way than that prescribed by ritual slaughter, may not be eaten for food by the observant Jew, for they are *Trefah*—unfit for food—unless they are so slaughtered.

The Yoreh Deah, under the heading of Trefah, or mortally wounded animals, describes various kinds of these. And the ordinances on the subject discuss various injuries to animals which make them Trefah—unfit for food—and of which the eight principal ones are the following:

1. Derusa
2. Nekuva
3. Hasera
4. Netula
5. Kerua
6. Nefula
7. Pesuka
8. Shevura

The Sheḥita, the Jewish ritual of slaughter, presents as its most important ramification of this topic, the conditions under which animals may be eaten. This, indeed, is a very important and complicated subject.

Slaughterers, to qualify, must be specially trained. They must pass a rigid examination in dealing with the technic of slaughtering, which includes the proper

sharpening and handling of the knife with which the slaughtering is done. Special textbooks have been written and compiled by learned authorities. These have been published for the instruction of those who wish to learn the approved method of slaughtering. It is a method as humane as it is possible to make slaughter of this kind; and it is recognized generally as the least painful and the most advantageous method of slaughtering animals, for reasons as follows:

In the process of ritual slaughtering, the slaughterer must pay special attention to five points. First, the cutting must be effected without interruption, with one stroke—(Shehiya). Secondly, the cutting must be done with a very sharp knife, without the slightest pressure on the instrument, but through simple severing of the tissues by drawing the sharp blade over them (Derasa). Thirdly, the cutting must be done without intervention of any foreign body between the knife and the animal (Ḥalada). Fourthly, the incision must be made in the prescribed vulnerable area, so that the cutting may lead to free bleeding and quick death of the animal (Hagrama). Fifthly, the blade must be flawless and keen without the least irregularity of the cutting edge (Ikkur). All these regulations, undoubtedly, are intended to render the process of slaughter as painless as possible to the animal, to assure rapid and complete drainage of the blood from the large severed vessels, so as to produce, expeditiously, unconsciousness and death to the animal, and so as to effect the blood drainage from the carcass before the blood begins to congeal.

IV

Prohibited Mixtures and Combinations

It is a strict regulation, according to the Jewish law founded on Biblical passages and amplified by traditional interpretations, that meat and milk foods should not be mixed or eaten together under any circumstances. The one exception to this regulation, however, is that of extreme illness where such combinations are prescribed by the attending physician. But no other uses of such mixtures are permissible. This regulation, according to the rabbis, applies to all meats both of cattle and fowl, but not to fish. The term milk food is to be construed not only as milk itself, but as all dairy products—butter, cheese, etc.

A logical corollary to this regulation is its extension to everything which is used in preparing meat and milk dishes. All utensils which are utilized for preparing meat and milk foods, respectively, must be kept separated. In actual practice this prohibition of mixing milk and meat—based on the Biblical injunctions found in Exodus, Chapter xxxiv. 26, and Deuteronomy, Chapter xxiv. 21—has been supplemented by regulations of the rabbis prohibiting the partaking of milk after meat except after the expiration of from one to six hours, determined by geographical custom. Further details will be found in the Codices.

V

Hygienic Regulations

It is a cardinal principle of Judaism that man must take the greatest care of his health in order to enable

him to carry out with the greatest efficiency the plans of the Almighty, Who placed him on this earth. And for this reason it is considered man's sacred duty to observe, consistent with Jewish laws, those hygienic regulations promulgated not only in the Bible but advocated by medical specialists at all times. The Biblical injunction "And ye shall take great care for your soul" is the basis for this code of conduct. A considerable section of the Jewish laws of conduct deal with purely hygienic practices; and among them are discussed various articles of diet which may, or may not, be partaken of on account of their hygienic importance. Thus Maimonides in *Hilkhoth Middoth* devotes much space to a discussion of hygiene, and in much the same manner as that of other ethical principles. In general it may be said that any food which has been shown by medical research or otherwise to be dangerous or deleterious to health is not to be eaten, even though it be technically allowable under the classification of permissible foods. The reason for this is, as has been stated: It is our duty to keep in the best of health so that we may serve the Creator with the greatest measure of efficiency. This section of the Jewish food laws, which is sometimes overlooked, is in complete agreement with the latest scientific outlook on life.

Significance of the Dietary Laws

It is a fundamental principle of Jewish religion and philosophy that all the dietary laws are to be regarded as Ḥukkim, or disciplinary measures, to be obeyed much in the same way as the soldier obeys the behest

of his general. Actions count more than words, or as the Bible puts it, *Na-aseh we-Nishmah*—first let us do, and then give ear to arguments. The rabbis state that "one must not say I do not eat pork because it is not healthful; on the contrary, one must say pork is a delightful food but I must not eat it because the Lord has forbidden it." (See Rashi or Leviticus xxvi.) Having once enunciated this fundamental Jewish attitude towards the dietary laws, it is quite permissible and indeed desirable to inoculate the appreciation of the laws through every means possible, of other historical, physiological, hygienic, scientific or any channel of investigation. To the faithful Jew it is a matter of obvious truth, as it is to every religious person of any faith, that whatever has been commanded by the Deity who is the Absolute Truth and Absolute Good, must *ipso facto* be useful and desirable and beneficent from *every* point of view, spiritual and physical. Hence it should not be surprising that the Dietary Laws are wholesome. That is what the faithful have a right to expect them to be. In fact, examined from the sanitary point of view or from the point of view of public health, the Biblical dietary laws and injunctions have through all ages been regarded by Jews or Gentiles as of the greatest practical hygienic value.

With the advance and development of modern medicine in its various ramifications, the appreciation of this fact has grown instead of decreasing. Thus, for instance, modern pathology has shown that oysters and various mollusks are carriers of many deadly germs such as the typhoid bacillus. Physiological investigations have brought out the fact that the eating of

the flesh of many mollusks and many other lower animals forbidden by the Jewish law is liable to lead to urticaria and other skin affections of the neurotic type. Other animal foods forbidden by the Torah have been known to produce undue and excessive excitement of the sexual passions. Hog meat has been shown by the microscope and investigations in parasitology to be frequently infested with trichinæ, small worms which are swallowed by men when eating such meat, and which it is almost impossible to get rid of after a person has once been infected.

The importance and value of Hebrew ritual slaughtering of cattle has been the subject of a number of interesting works. It is well known that the animal body after death undergoes putrefaction, but it has also been shown that various tissues of the animal body do not decompose or putrefy at the same time or with equal rapidity. Some tissues are very resistant to the ravages of putrefying organisms while others begin to decompose almost immediately after death. Thus it was demonstrated by the present author some years ago that arteries can be kept alive after death for as long as forty-nine days, as shown by physiological experiments. The author has been able to demonstrate that a strip of such artery when treated in the proper way is still live as ascertained by its response to the action of various drugs. (*Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics,* 1914.)

On the other hand among those tissues and organs which putrefy very rapidly are the brain and blood. Blood rots or putrefies very quickly after death and one of the methods of preserving meat is by means of

draining all of the blood from the muscle tissue. The Hebrew ritual of slaughter, which requires the severing of large blood vessels, insures the draining of the blood from the carcass. A still further freeing of the meat from any superfluous blood is brought about by means of "salting" which insures not only the extraction of blood, but also helps to preserve the muscle tissue. The laws concerning the method of slaughter and post-mortem examination of the animal bodies after they have been thus slaughtered, further insure the hygienic wholesomeness of the meat because the Jewish law forbids the use of any animals which have been found post-mortem to contain pathological lesions. We cannot enter into details in this place. (See "Sheḥita" by S. Lieben, *Jewish Library,* Second Series.)

The Jewish method of slaughtering is also valuable from the hygienic point of view in that it is far superior to the methods in which the animals are first treated with an anesthetic or asphyxiated. The inhalation of a general anesthetic such as ether or chloroform produces biochemical changes in the body, dissolving the lipoids and interfering with the wholesomeness of the meat. Furthermore, all the other methods of slaughter do not insure the draining of the blood, and they produce more or less asphyxia which also tends to produce deleterious changes. Thus there is abundant evidence from a purely medical point of view that the Jewish dietary laws are of great benefit to health, which would and should act as an inducement to those whose primary thought in life is the preservation of their skin. The Jewish method of slaughter is also a most humane one, as the severing of the great vessels

and nerves of the neck, and immediate exsanguination, lead to unconsciousness of the animal in a few seconds, with the minimal sensation of pain preceding it. It is well known that a clean-cut incision with a highly sharpened blade is not painful.

Various other explanations for the dietary laws have been advanced from time to time in various ages, all of which are of interest and tend to further our appreciation of their worth. Thus according to Philo and some other early Jewish philosophers the various animals such as birds, which are forbidden by the Bible to be eaten, are intended to teach a moral. According to this view the animals may be regarded as symbolic and the abstaining from the eating of some of them should impress valuable moral lessons upon those who practice these laws. For instance, the ossifrage is a bird of cruel habits which drops its prey from a great height in order to break its bones against the rocks below. Such cruelty is to be condemned by men even in animals, for cruelty to animals is liable to reflect itself among men in cruelty to fellow-men. The pelican is a very interesting bird from the zoölogical point of view, but certain of its habits seem to convey the idea that it preys upon its own flesh. Hence according to such moralizing philosophers, this bird is forbidden by the Bible.

Another explanation of some of the dietary laws urged by various philosophers is based on their political and historical aspects. According to Maimonides and others, one purpose of the sacrifices enjoined by the Bible was intended to offset certain superstitions and idolatrous worship among the heathen and other an-

cient peoples. The same applies to the dietary laws. Thus even now we know that the Hindu holds in veneration and even worships the cow and other cattle. The Bible, therefore, directed that such objects of worship should be brought as sacrifices upon the Holy Altar. On the same grounds it has been urged that meat of oxen and other animals may be eaten to show that there was no holiness or divinity attaching to them.

With the advancement of scientific research we have come to appreciate more and more the beauty and the significances of various Biblical injunctions and more particularly of the food laws. One or two examples from the author's experience will serve to emphasize this point. The Torah forbids distinctly the eating of "Zab" or toad (Leviticus xi. 29). The word Zab, from the root meaning to swell, refers to the toad's habit of puffing up when irritated. Not only is the toad forbidden to be eaten, but according to the Talmud this animal causes ritual defilement even by touch. It is interesting to note in the Talmud that a very closely related species of animal, namely, the frog, is not considered as unclean as the toad. While frogs are not allowed to be eaten, coming in the category of creeping things, the touching of a live frog is not considered to be contaminating. Why this hair-splitting distinction between the toad and the frog? The answer to this riddle was not forthcoming until about 1910 when Prof. John J. Abel and I published our investigation concerning the secretions of the tropical toad called Bufo Agua (*Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics,* 1910). This tropical toad contains in its skin certain glands which secrete a milky exudate which is a powerful poison. Indeed this dried

secretion has been used by Indians in South America as a deadly arrow poison.

Through the work of Prof. Abel and myself it was shown that this secretion contained two very powerful substances, one known as Epinophrin and another which we named Bufagin. A similar poison is contained in the secretions of the skin glands even of the ordinary non-tropical toads. No such poisonous substances have been isolated or found in the skin of the frog. It is known that when an animal, e.g., a dog, bites a toad, it is poisoned and salivates at its mouth, whereas biting of a frog produces no poisonous effect. Thus we see that the very touch of the toad is actually contaminating and dangerous, in the literal pharmacological or toxicological sense of the word, whereas the frog does not produce any poisonous effects when it is touched. We can, therefore, well understand the distinction drawn between the toad and the frog by the Hebrew law.

Another dietary injunction which was puzzling and unexplainable until recent years is the distinction made by the Jewish law between various kinds of fat. The dietary law distinguishes between permissible fat known as "Shumen" and certain kinds of fat which are not permissible known as "Ḥelev." Why this peculiar differentiation? The answer is obvious in the light of recent investigations on nutrition. It has been found that in addition to proteins, fats and carbohydrates which are necessary for the nutrition of animals, small amounts of certain substances known as vitamines, known as fat soluble "A," are contained in certain kinds of fats and especially those fats which surround the vital organs, and in the liver. Ordinary

fatty or adipose tissue found under the skin and around muscles is not equivalent in food value and especially in vitamine content to certain layers of fat found in the interior of the body. Thus, in the literature of recent physiological and biochemical researches, a contrast is drawn sharply *between two kinds of fats*. This is certainly a parallel to the distinction which is made by the Jewish Law in regard to the two kinds of fat, one of which may be utilized as food and the other not.

The regulation concerning the non-mixing of meat and milk food plays a very important rôle in Jewish life. We have not been able so far to find a scientific or, rather, hygienic basis for this practice. This law, as is well known, is based upon the Biblical injunction which forbids the "seething of the kid in the milk of its mother," and is classed by some in the same group as the laws which forbid the slaughtering of a mother and its offspring, on the same day, or the destruction of a bird together with its nest and brood. All of these laws are, of course, even on superficial examination, conducive to the teaching of mercy and kindness to lower animals. This, however, would not appear to be the primary reason for observing them. Our rabbis actually consider it a sin even to base our praise of God on the fact that He has shown mercy in His Torah to the young fledglings in the bird's nest, for such praise would imply that He discriminates in His mercy between different creatures (Berakhoth 33b). But "the Lord is good to all and His tender mercies are over all His works" (Psalms cxlv. 9). He is good to all. That is a self-evident truth to every religious man.

Granting, however, this fundamental principle of Jewish philosophy, we may with profit examine the

various laws and regulations in the light of their usefulness and one cannot but help regarding the injunctions forbidding eating of meat and milk in that light. The observance of this law should ever remind one of the virtue of mercifulness and to avoid cruelty. The Hebrew word "Ḥereb" means *Sword*. It consists of three letters, capitals of three words denoting traits of character which are peculiar to true Israelites. They are "Baishanim" (modest), "Ḥasidim" (pious), and "Raḥmanim" (merciful). If such a moral had been kept before men constantly there would be no wars. The details concerning the observance of the above laws, such as the mixture of meat and milk, are but the logical consequence following a serious consideration of them. The Jewish Law forbids not only the eating of meat and milk together but makes obligatory to separate even the cooking utensils and dishes used for each respectively. This should not be surprising in the light of modern science. If any one has ever seen a surgical operation in a well-appointed hospital, he may have noticed that everything is carefully sterilized. If a knife or other instrument should fall upon the ground it would be considered criminal negligence for the surgeon to pick it up and proceed with his operation. Even though the instrument is *outwardly unchanged,* it has become contaminated with invisible germs or bacteria which may be lurking on the floor and it must be resterilized or discarded. If such care is observed in regard to the practice of medicine or surgery, why not be just as careful in regard to the observance of spiritual and moral laws?

These institutions are also of incalculable value from a broader philosophical and sociological point of view.

This importance is admirably expressed by my dear friend and colleague, Prof. W. M. Haffkine (*The Menorah Journal,* Volume II, April, 1916, No. 2), as follows: "They have been obeyed since remotest antiquity, and the careful performance of their prescription has served as much as anything else to keep alive in the Jew the consciousness of his Judaism and to preserve his purity of race, just as analogous prescriptions of the Brahminical ritual have protected some of the purest strains of Aryans. In contrast to not a few of our coreligionists who have no occasion for weeks and months together, while attending school, office, or places of business, to bestow a thought on their creed or their people, the Jew who keeps kashruth has to think of his religious and communal allegiance on the occasion of every meal, wherever his lot may be cast at the time; and on every such occasion the observance of the law constitutes a renewal of acquiescence in the fact that he is a Jew and a deliberate acknowledgment of that fact. The recognition so obtained from the individual, the family circle, or the persons assembled in a social gathering, is an ever-present bond between the members; and it is with profound insight and justice that the attitude of the rabbis is of incomparably deeper meaning and justification than that which prompts the military to insist on a soldier saluting his flag or honoring his uniform. The arrangements needed in the circumstances of modern life for carrying out the precepts of kashruth are accessible to all who earnestly care; and at a time when discipline and coördination are more necessary than ever, because of the risks of dissolution which threaten our more and more scattered Jewish communities, ob-

servance of these rules should be fervently demanded by all of our elders and religious teachers."

Practical Aspects

Inasmuch as the chief interest of the dietary laws from the Jewish point of view is after all a practical one, and as even from the philosophical point of view the value of these laws is most important from the pragmatical standpoint, that is, from the practical benefits accruing from their observance, it is necessary to dwell a little upon some of the modern Jewish food problems from the practical side.

Modern "civilization" with its rapid strides in science and arts, for good and bad, has introduced revolutionary methods of food preparation on the one hand, and of food adulteration and food falsification on the other, which make it essential for the Jewish Dayan or law authority to coöperate with the Jewish scientist in order to decide intelligently many a question (she'ela) concerning the kashruth of foods. A time there was when the scholar, be he Jew or Gentile, could boast of being acquainted with the sum total of human knowledge. That time is past, and nowadays the rabbi can no more presume to be an authority on the composition of some modern foods than a philologist or geologist could decide on a point of medicine. For the proper and rational consideration of dietary problems the rabbi must coöperate with the chemist, the physiologist, the pharmacologist and toxicologist and other scientific experts. He is the judge who should be competent to decide on the points of Jewish Law involved in any given case; the facts, however, should be determined by the scientific food expert.

The writer has made a number of investigations concerning the kashruth of certain foods, and will briefly mention some of the facts that have been obtained.

A scientific inquiry into the composition of ice cream reveals that the cheaper grade often contains gelatine which, as is generally known, is trefah animal matter. The more expensive ice creams, however, are free from this substance.

Bread is one of the foods which many people buy without much thought about its ingredients. The author has inspected and studied one of the large modern bakeries which turns out 75,000 loaves of white bread a day, besides rye bread and pies. One of the ingredients of most white bread is a certain compound which is a mixture of lard, beef-suet and oil. Water rolls and most rye breads, however, are made without this substance. A large factory which bakes biscuits and cakes was also inspected. It was found that in practically every case, the dough for all kinds of cakes and biscuits is shortened by lard or a lard compound. Cotton-seed oil and cocoanut oil are used for shortening special kinds of biscuits. The well-known soda crackers so extensively used in this country are, as far as the author has been able to learn, shortened with lard. This kind of shortening is also found in pretzels. Other instances of this kind are described by the author in detail elsewhere.

These few citations merely serve to emphasize the point that a real observance of the Dietary Laws must be based on a knowledge of modern food production methods. The dictum of our wise men that, "Lo am ha'aretz chasid," or that "Ignorance is a bar to piety,"

is nowhere better illustrated than in modern kashruth usages.

Conclusion

The author has endeavored in the present essay to outline briefly the various Jewish Dietary Laws, to describe as far as possible their value and significance, and to dwell on some of the present-day problems involved in their observance. The dietary laws, like the Hebrew Sabbath, are fundamental ones of Judaism and just as the full significance and beauty of the Hebrew Sabbath cannot be appreciated except after honest and conscientious trial so are the dietary laws and regulations. Here the essential principle of Judaism—na-a-se we-nish-ma—first act and then speculate, holds good. It is hoped that those Jews who read these pages will be stimulated to more careful observance of these laws and it is also hoped that their friendly neighbors on reading these lines will be inspired with greater respect and even admiration. "And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes saw, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but make them known unto thy children's children." (Deuteronomy iv. 8-9.)

X

THE GREAT PREAMBLE—A REREADING OF GENESIS

BY

NATHAN ISAACS

X

THE GREAT PREAMBLE—A REREADING OF GENESIS

Foreword

This essay has no reference to the divine origin and authority of the Torah which are dealt with in other chapters of the book. It is a critique of questions that are asked about Genesis.

Questions are by no means the innocent, neutral things they are commonly represented to be. Any one who has ever been on the witness stand knows that there are unfair questions, leading—and misleading—questions, pertinent questions and impertinent ones, searching questions and above all foolish questions. Teachers know that they can gauge a student's mind better by his questions than by his answers. Among the Jews it has long been recognized as a distinguishing characteristic of the wise man that his questions are sensible, whereas he who asks questions to no purpose is branded as an ignoramus.

Fools have asked more questions about Genesis than the wise can answer. It is no part of the purpose of the present essay to comment on the conflicting answers that have been attempted. Its aim is merely to point the way to more sensible questions.

Genesis, a Preamble

A preamble is an introduction to a constitution, statute or code of laws. It may recite the motive, reason, intent or the basis of what follows. It may undertake to explain the authority of the legislator on an historical or philosophical basis. Whatever its method or specific purpose, it is no part of the text that it introduces, and yet it is not without legislative authority or other importance. Often it furnishes a key to the interpretation of the legal text, particularly when the interpreter is concerned with the spirit as well as the letter of the law. It may have an interest of its own because of the scraps of history or poetry or philosophy that it incorporates incidentally in the furtherance of its main task, but that main task differentiates it from works of history, poetry, philosophy or any other literary species.

Genesis and the first chapters of Exodus taken together constitute such a preamble. It introduces the work that has become known as "The Law." [1]

Frankly, the proposition that Genesis is a preamble or part of a preamble is neither so obvious nor so free from serious implications as it may seem. For the

[1] "Torah" has been translated into ancient and modern languages by an equivalent of the English expression "The Law." What this translation of the historic word lacks in accuracy it makes up in the wealth of its valid connotations. Of course the term "Law" must not be understood in the narrow sense in which a modern jurist defines "municipal law." It includes the relations between Man and God as well as the relations between Man and Man. Furthermore it includes those delicate and subtle relations between Man and Man that are today relegated to the realm of Ethics because not readily protected by the enforcement machinery of the state. Modern jurists, again, draw hard and fast lines between positive and natural law. But to read these distinctions into an ancient law book is to be guilty of a manifest anachronism.

Christian reader and even the Christian scholar, it suggests an "about face" order. He has read the book as an entity. He has spun sermons from its texts. He has seen every word subjected to the minutest scrutiny of philologist, theologian, textual critic and higher critic. He has seen the ideas in it taken from their context and passed on by the astronomer, geologist, biologist, anthropologist, ethnologist and professional historian. Students of comparative folklore, comparative religion and other comparativists have gaily proceeded on the assumption that they could use Genesis as the definitive Hebrew text of their special study. In all this current literature one looks in vain for a thoroughgoing recognition of the proposition that Genesis is not a book, but only a part of a preamble.

Rashi's Opening

For such a recognition we must go back to Rashi, the greatest of Jewish commentators. "Why," he asks in his opening paragraph, quoting the words of an earlier sage, "does the Torah begin with the story of Creation?" Why not with the first string of laws, the twelfth chapter of Exodus?

Let us mark well the implications of this question. It could hardly have been asked by a Christian. Why? For the simple reason that Christianity has long indulged in the presumption that the legal portions of the Bible are obsolete. The narrative passages, on the other hand, are no less true today than when first written. Laws can be repealed; facts cannot be. To the Christian reader, therefore, the Five Books of Moses are preserved as Historical Books. To be sure, there are legal "documents" inserted here, there and

everywhere, but they are appendices, overgrown footnotes, archæological parentheses. That is exactly how they are printed, for example, in Moulton's excellent *Modern Readers' Bible.* To one approaching Genesis with such a point of view, Rashi's question, why inject the narrative into the Law Book, would hardly occur. Instead he might ask: "Why retain these long codes of ancient and obsolete laws?" The Jewish assumption underlying the question before us is simply that the Torah is primarily a Law Book, that the non-legal parts are auxiliary, and their presence is to be explained by their utility in explaining "The Law."

Faith and Works

This difference between the Christian and the Jewish traditional approaches to "The Law" is by no means accidental nor superficial. The Jew's quest in the Torah is practical guidance in the art of right living. His questions are what to do and how to do it. He seeks salvation, if we may employ a Christianism, by works. The Christian concept since the days of Paul has been "that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Romans iii, 28). His quest in "The Law" is at most a search for something to believe. Hence the Christian fundamentalist is very sensitive to any disturbance of the fact-concepts he has drawn from a reading of his church's particular version or translation of the Bible. In this sense there is no Jewish fundamentalism. There is, of course, an Orthodoxy, so-called, zealous to obey the smallest commandment of "The Law" with all its ramifications and refinements. But this Orthodoxy is as little concerned over beliefs as to who Melchizedek really was or points

in the chronological order of events, as is the Christian fundamentalist over the wearing of linsey-woolsey or the numbering of the commandments. It is curious how rarely they find themselves on common ground, though they have many a common opponent who carelessly confuses them in order to confound them to his own satisfaction.[2]

The Plausibility of Preambles

Whatever we may think of the relative positions of Conduct and Belief in Judaism, obviously a preamble is the very last place in the world in which to look for a command to believe new doctrines. Perhaps no type of literature is by its nature less controversial, less innovating. Its business is to be plausible, and to make easy the way to the law book that follows. If Genesis has become a controversial book in the course of centuries it is hardly reasonable to assume that it was so in the beginning. As Rashi's answer to the famous question indicates, the function of these chapters was to make all that followed plausible, acceptable.

A preamble deals normally with the known rather than the unknown. A "whereas" followed by a doubtful, new, controversial proposition is disingenuous. How much, then, we may ask, of Genesis purported to be new when the Torah was promulgated, and how

[2] An apt illustration may be drawn from a review of the First Series of these essays in *The Menorah Journal,* xvi, p. 79, where the reviewer burlesques what he calls "the older practice" thus: "If one suggests that phenomena point to evolution rather than to creation, the naïvely orthodox will say that God created these phenomena . . . for the purpose of segregating the truly faithful from shaky ones, ready to be swayed by mere appearances." The witticism transferred to a controversy in which fundamental beliefs are not the issue, simply misses the point.

much of it was essentially a restatement of the common knowledge of Israel?

Common Law and Common Lore

To make this question clear let us turn to the second paragraph in Rashi. There the great commentator denies that the purpose of the first sentence of the Torah is to teach us the order in which events took place. He reads not "In the beginning God created" but "In the beginning of God's creation of heaven and earth, when the earth was still chaotic" and so on. Everybody presumably knows and accepts without question the idea that God was the Creator, and the preamble can safely allude to it in passing. Whatever we may think of this particular piece of exegesis in this place, there is a highly significant and perfectly valid assumption behind it: namely, that the narrative chapters of the Torah take much for granted as part of the general information of Israel, and that to reiterate this general information is unnecessary in a preamble.

This idea is closely akin to one that has already been developed by several writers as to the pre-Mosaic common law, a knowledge of which is presumed in the Mosaic style—only here we are concerned with the pre-Mosaic general knowledge of Israel presumed in the introductory discourse. Thus, in "The Law" we are told what the law of inheritance shall be if a man die and have no son. It is deemed unnecessary to tell the people what the law is if he has a son. Presumably everybody knows that; it is the common law and there is no occasion for repealing it or repeating it. In like manner, cities of refuge are established to mitigate

the evils of the blood feud, but we are left to rely pretty much on the common law for a description of the practice that is thereby mitigated. In the stories of the patriarchs that form part of Genesis, we find allusions to the Hebrews actually practicing the Hebrew common law of inheritance, the blood feud and the levirate. The jurist can readily accept the rabbinical dictum that the patriarchs observed the unwritten law before the written law was given. I now venture the suggestion that Israel's pre-Mosaic memories were not limited to laws and customs, but included many concepts of a more general nature, such as the preamble could and did take for granted, or restated for a new purpose, with a new emphasis, in a new setting.

Old Lore—New Uses

We return to the question: How much pre-Biblical Israelite general information is taken for granted, how much is simply repeated? The question is too new, so far as I am aware, to call for an immediate answer. It is not the old question of the higher critics: "How much *was* new?" It is the simpler question: "How much *purported* to be new, taking into consideration, among other things, the nature of the literary composition before us?" Certainly the style of Genesis assumes a good deal of preliminary information on the part of its audience. Events can be dated by a mere allusion to other events or to well-known persons. "It came to pass in the days of Amraphel," for example. Persons and places can be identified as the well-known this or that. Even the rivers that flow out of Eden are so identified (Gen. ii. 11*ff.*). Moab and Benammi

are identified as the well-known ancestors of peoples too well known (xix, 37-38). Of one man in an obscure genealogy we are suddenly told that he was the famous Anah who discovered something or other (xxxvi, 24). In any event it would be a curious assumption that Israel alone among all the peoples of antiquity was without a creation story, without a flood story, without an account of dispersion of peoples or the origin of races, until the promulgation of the Torah, while all their neighbors had such stories. It is safer to begin with the assumption that Israel's pre-Biblical oral Torah included the bulk of the narratives in Genesis —but, of course, not in the form of a preamble.

What is novel and striking, then, is the new use of this more or less familiar material. That consists in raising the questions and laying the foundations for their answers that will effectively introduce the law. The questions raised have a perfectly clear bearing on the task at hand.

The Questions Raised in Genesis

The ancient Hebrew looked out on his world and beheld neighboring peoples who were like him and yet different. Some of them spoke languages very similar to his own—the Moabites, for example. Some practiced in one form or another some of his customs—there was circumcision, for example, among the Ishmaelites. Some of these peoples bore a close resemblance to others; there were families of peoples. Some were distinguished for their intelligence or valor. Others were crude and barbarous. Yet none of them seemed to have in common with Israel its religious law. Why? Were all mankind one family? If so,

whence the diversity of languages, of traits, of appearances? These questions are put forward in the genealogies, in the story of the confusion of tongues, in those of the migration of peoples, in the sins and good deeds of ancestors, in parental blessings and curses.

Why was Israel chosen to have "the Law"? The patriarchal stories attack this question. Within Israel itself there are differences. These, like the differences among the nations, are reflected in genealogies, in ancestral traits, in parental blessings.

Israel saw good and evil in the world, joy and sorrow, life and death. What could be the origin of evil in a world created by a good God? The story of the Garden of Eden is one of several in which this type of thought is reflected. Not only his relations with God, but his relations to his neighbors, interests Israel. With some he stands as a covenanted ally, to others he is the sworn enemy. Why?

Similar questions are reflected in the mythologies and literatures of other ancient peoples. They are in a sense inevitable questions. We still ask them, perhaps in a more sophisticated form, today. We are still interested in the causes of things, from the Prime Cause of all things down to the proximate cause of this morning's news. As to law, in particular, we are interested in its historical sources, and in explaining the human relations which it marks out. The ancient world defined "law" more comprehensively, but in the corresponding fields of human thought we ask essentially the same questions that the great Hebrew preamble put forward.

Simple and straightforward as the questions of

Genesis seem in this light, their answers are at first disappointing to the modern reader. A question sounds the heights and depths of the universe. In answer we are given a childishly simple story. We peer into the beginnings of things; we ask about the origin of trouble, for example. The answer deals with the serpent in the Garden. We ponder over the beginnings of human language, and we are told that Adam named the creatures. We wonder about the diversification of peoples and of languages, and we get the story of the Tower of Babel. We make shrewd observations of peoples, and are referred to tales of their eponymic ancestors. We ask about the beginnings of all things on earth, and we are told the story of Six Days.

The Limits of a Preamble

At this point it is important to bear in mind what has been said so far of the purpose and method of a preamble. It uses familiar materials for a novel purpose. The purpose, let us remember, is a narrow one. We are interested for the moment not in the abstract philosophy of good and evil, of reward and punishment, of the unseen forces in the world. Hebrew thinkers dealt with those questions appropriately in other connections. One does not turn to Justinian's frequently imitated introductory remarks about success in arms and lawmaking going together to make a great monarch's work complete, for the Roman's last word on the philosophy of war. Nor do students of ancient philosophy take too seriously the highsounding words about the law of nature being that which nature itself has taught all animals.

Presumably these generalities cannot be sharply op-

posed to the prevailing thought in the Roman or rather the Byzantine world, but one doesn't look for the definitive statement of a philosophy in a preamble. Nor is a preamble a history book even if it cites history for its own purpose. Hammurabi and other writers of preambles have spoken of their victories and of their benevolent motives, but it is obvious that they left unsaid a good deal that they might have recorded on some less formal, less stately occasion. There were Hebrew historians who covered the period of history touched on in Genesis for other purposes and from other points of view. Finally we should hardly judge a people's poetic sense from a reading of its preambles. If the preamble sees nothing but the symbol of a covenant in the rainbow, as it does in many other objects, it does not follow that Hebrew poets were insensible to the beauty of the rainbow. In fact the ancient Hebrew had many poetic thoughts about nature and creation, but the preamble was not the place to express them. Where, one may ask without irreverence, was the writer of the preamble,

> "When (the Lord) laid the foundations of the earth?
> . . . . . .
> When the morning stars sang together
> And all the sons of God shouted together?" (Job xxxviii. 4-7.)

Certainly he tells us nothing of foundations nor a celestial concert nor jubilation. Whatever the ancient Hebrew had to say about these highly poetic pictures of Creation he reserved for works other than this great preamble.

The Answers in Genesis

For the purpose in hand the answers in the stories have a remarkable consistency in spite of the length and the breadth to which the writer has developed them. They vigorously reject the relatively simple answers given to these questions by Israel's polytheistic neighbors. It was easy, for example, for the polytheist to explain strife and evil and trouble in the world by postulating hostile deities, gods of good and gods of evil. The preamble rejects this simple explanation and frankly assumes the burden of the difficulties raised by this rejection. Evil is the work of God's own creatures, suffered by Him for His own purposes. Those purposes are not easily understood. The granting of a freedom of choice between obedience and disobedience among creatures is not a simple matter, and yet the concept is essential in putting forward a divine Law for the guidance of men. But why not for all men alike? Here again the polytheist has no difficulty. The diversity of mankind, and the consequent diversity of rights and duties can be explained by a diversity among the gods who create or father or favor men. Our preamble rejects this hypothesis. Hence the Election of Israel is one of its major problems, and more than half of the preamble is devoted to it. It cannot even lighten the burden of explanation by leaving anything to luck, the favor of the fickle goddess, Fortuna. The preamble presupposes a well-organized world in which sin and punishment go hand in hand. The polytheist's disorganized universe is not hampered in dealing with discrimination among peoples by any doctrine of the brotherhood of man. Our preamble

insists on this unity of the human family, and faces frankly the problems which it entails, such as the diversity of races and of languages. In general, the whole preamble negatives every suggestion inconsistent with the idea of One Supreme Authority, the Authority that planned the world and legislated for it.

If Genesis is a Preamble

The simple proposition here presented carries with it some important corollaries. In fact, if Genesis is to be read as a preamble, the bulk of the modern literature about it must be rewritten. It is not so much a matter of restating facts or revamping conclusions drawn from the facts, but the major issues must be reframed. Writers in opposed camps have been fighting about the science in Genesis as if Genesis purported to be a book of science. Of course, if you wish, you can attack the scientific outlook of a preamble, just as you can the scientific outlook of a poem, but then you must consciously take your stand on lower ground. Writers will still compare Hebrew lore and the lore of the neighboring peoples. But the emphasis now shifts itself from the similarities to the differences between the stories in the preamble and the same stories as they appear elsewhere. There are flood stories, for example, that merely chronicle the whims and contests of minor gods with men as incidental victims. Needless to say, such a version, even if it ever were current among the Hebrews, would have been worse than useless. So would mere accounts of the goodness or glory of the patriarchs if they lacked the element of explaining Israel's position in the world with particular reference to his preferential rights and duties. It is these

elements that are particularly worthy of investigation, and it is precisely these which in the present state of scholarship are most neglected.

A preamble, though not strictly a part of a legal text, is very helpful in the process of interpreting the text. Rarely do the commentators seek any connection between the text and the preamble. A single illustration must suffice to show the possibilities. The common ancestry of mankind, as distinguished from any theory of separate acts of creation for various races, is the theory propounded consistently in the preamble. The doctrine finds its reflections in the law in the prevailing doctrine of equality before the law. The exceptions to the doctrine are likewise to be understood in the light of the preamble. In this sense the preamble is the first commentary on the law.

In a word, there has been much search in Genesis for the official or definitive attitude of the ancient Hebrews on science, philosophy, theology, and a host of other subjects. It is submitted that by its literary nature it is precluded from being Israel's full record of these matters. What it should be studied for most carefully is the attitude of the Hebrews on such pre-legal topics as the relation between man and man, between man and woman, between nation and nation, the basis of special duties and privileges, the nature of legal and moral responsibility, and finally the relation of the whole plan to its Creator.

XI

DOGMA IN JUDAISM

BY

SALIS DAICHES

XI

DOGMA IN JUDAISM

Judaism is not a mere expression of dogmatic teaching or a summary of articles of faith. The term "faith" cannot be said to cover Judaism at all. Nor is Judaism merely a collection of rules or principles intended to regulate or direct the Jew's daily conduct, irrespective of his moral outlook or of his mental attitude towards God and man. The attempts that have been made from time to time by Jewish and non-Jewish thinkers to define Judaism in theological or philosophical terms have never met with success. In ancient times such attempts were not even made. In the Biblical age abstract philosophy or theology did not occupy the minds of men, and religious teaching did not require the sanction of the intellect. Indeed, so long as Israel's doctrine was an active and creative force and was capable of inspiring its exponents to visualize its ideals as divine emanations, philosophical analysis and theological dogmatizing could have no place in the spiritual storehouse of Israel's teachers.

Whether these ideals were of a theoretical or a practical nature, whether they had a spiritual or a material value, whether they were capable of a national or universal application, whether they were meant to guide the individual or the people or humanity at large, the men who uttered or spread the doctrines were convinced of their truth and binding force, and they invariably

pointed to God as the source of that teaching, as the supreme power controlling the lives of men and determining the destinies of nations. God was known, or thought of, as the Creator of the Universe, the cause of light, the source of wisdom, the lover of righteousness, the upholder of truth, the pattern of virtue. He was revered and worshiped as the Redeemer of Israel, the Revealer of the Torah, the Ruler of the World, the King of Kings. The need to prove the truth of all this, except by pointing to the facts of nature or of history as corroborating the revealed doctrine or accepted tradition, was never felt to exist. It was only "the fool who said in his heart there is no God." One who had his eyes open could not fail to see God.[1]

In Judaism God is not only the "first cause." He is the *only* cause. He works in everything and through everything. He caused the world to come into existence and He causes things to happen continually. God is known through his revealed attributes, which can be described, and have been described, in terms intelligible to man. These attributes can be pointed to, and have been pointed to, as compelling admiration and inviting imitation. Man's highest duty and greatest privilege is to follow the ways of God. But it is not for man to inquire into the nature of God or to define His transcendental qualities. Although made in God's image, man cannot tell by the divine reflection in him what his Creator is like.

The Jew is not commanded to *believe* in God. For belief is only personal or subjective; it is not based on cognition or knowledge and it involves a lack of cer-

[1] Cf. the writer's article on "Atheism (Jewish)" in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religions and Ethics,* Vol. II.

tainty. Belief may assume the nature of a conviction, but it is not necessarily convincing. It cannot be imparted to others as a result of investigation, as a demand of reason, or as a postulate of one's moral consciousness. But the God of Israel is revealed in the visible world, in nature as well as in history. As the God of history He is seen more clearly in the career of Israel than in that of any other people. "I am the Lord thy God who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt." It is not a dogma or an article of faith. It is a declaration, a revealed fact.[2] The Israelite is commanded to listen to the declaration and to take note of the revelation. Wise observations will confirm him in the acceptance and appreciation of the revealed fact. "Hear, O Israel," or "Understand, O Israel," "the Lord our God, the Lord is one." This is the Lawgiver's call and reminder. The Israelite must know God. "And thou shalt know this day, and lay it to thine heart, that the Lord He is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath, there is none else."

In the most solemn moments of the year, at the close of Atonement Day, the Jew exclaims: "The Lord is God." At the end of his earthly pilgrimage he leaves this life with the same declaration on his lips. He does not say: "I believe that the Lord is God."

How then could one describe the cardinal teachings of Judaism, such as the doctrines of the existence and unity of God, as "articles of faith?" It was evidently this consideration that induced Moses Mendelssohn to change Maimonides' phrase "I believe with a perfect

[2] Cf. the writer's essay on "The Jewish Interpretation of History" in his *Aspects of Judaism,* Routledge, London. 1928, p. 42 *ff.*

faith" into "I recognize as true and certain." [3] It was partly for this reason, and mainly in this sense, that Mendelssohn declared in his *Jerusalem* that Judaism had no articles of faith.[4] Solomon Schechter is therefore right in referring to Mendelssohn's assertion as to the absence of "dogmas" in Judaism as a "supposed assertion." [5] For both Maimonides and Mendelssohn recognized the cardinal doctrines of Judaism as unalterable principles, without which Judaism could not retain its character or exercise its influence as a guide through life, although they differed as to whether the acceptance or rejection of those principles on the part of the individual Jew involved merit or demerit and could be assigned reward or punishment. The reluctance of Albo, Crescas, and other Jewish thinkers to accept the thirteen principles of Maimonides as binding, or as meriting universal assent, is the result not only of disagreement as to the correct interpretation of Jewish teaching but also of the recognition that some of these doctrines cannot be accepted by the reasoning intellect with the same degree of certainty as others can. They refused to base Judaism on conceptions which were not derived from clear and definite Jewish teaching, and which by their very nature were bound to fluctuate and suffer modification as a result of philosophical speculation or scientific investigation.[6] And as no appeal to the facts of nature or of history could provide the necessary confirmation

[3] "Ich erkenne für wahr und gewiss." See M. Kayserling, *Moses Mendelssohn,* Leipzig, 1862, p. 565 *ff.*

[4] Mendelssohn, *Gesam. Schriften,* Leipzig, 1843, Vol. III, p. 319 *ff.*

[5] Schechter, *Studies in Judaism,* first series, p. 147.

[6] Cf. the writer's essay on "Judaism and Speculative Thought," *op. cit.,* p. 8 *ff.*

for some of these teachings, as they thought it did provide in the case of others, they deemed it improper to treat them all as equally fundamental and equally unalterable.

It can be safely said, however, that all authoritative exponents of Judaism are agreed as to the necessity of making spiritual truth the basis for material action. Transcendental ideas are of little value unless they influence and direct our earthly life. Right thinking and right living must go together. Judaism regards them as inseparable. There is, however, this difference between the world of thought and the world of action, between abstract reasoning and concrete living: In the realm of thought and of the spirit there must be freedom, there must be latitude, there must be a degree of adaptability. It is difficult to define or circumscribe ideas. It is even more difficult to set bounds to transcendental conceptions, however clearly they may be present in our minds. It is also inevitable that these conceptions should suffer in transmission, in being conveyed from one mind to another, and the changes they thus undergo cannot even be checked. It is therefore impossible to establish, or to recognize, a supreme authority in reference to notions which concern the world beyond our senses, even when these notions affect such fundamental postulates as God, soul, freedom of the will, or survival after death. There is thus no universal code, no *Shulchan Aruch,* provided in Judaism for the purpose of defining and enforcing spiritual doctrines. Even the articles of faith formulated in different ways by Maimonides, Albo, and others are really only broad principles laid down for the guidance of the investigating mind and for the protection of the

perplexed intellect. They are to prevent the uninitiated from falling into error, from groping in the dark, from adopting ideas which are irreconcilable with Biblical teaching. But they are not meant to render thinking unnecessary or improper, or to separate reason from faith. And some of the principles formulated by an authority like Maimonides are refused validity by authorities like Nachmanides, Gersonides or Joseph Albo. Others are explained in different ways by different thinkers. No exponent of Judaism is deprived of the right to give his own interpretation even to universally accepted doctrines.

In the realm of action, or of conduct, no such liberties are given. Conformity to a code, to *the* Code, is essential. Whatever degree of adaptability or flexibility may be inherent in the laws and rules of the *Shulchan Aruch,* the principles which guide the development are fixed, the lines are laid down authoritatively, and authority rules. Conduct is controlled in every detail, and no amount of independent thinking can justify a transgression of the Law.

It ought to be readily admitted that this freedom of interpretation in matters of doctrine is apt to render the spiritual basis of Judaism all the more secure and all the more permanent. It is just because the Jew is not expected to suppress his reasoning powers that he is able to uphold his ancestral faith in all its purity, and to give it the character of positive teaching which transcends even faith. It is just because the Jew has never agreed to say "credo quia absurdum" that his "creed" can appeal to him as the highest achievement of the intellect and as partaking of the nature of knowledge. His God can always be and always has

been the "God of Truth." "Truth is God's own seal," the rabbis teach. As it is impossible to think of Judaism without God, and as truth is inherent in the nature of God, Judaism is inseparable from truth.

The difference that can be observed in Judaism between the treatment of ideas and the attitude towards conduct can be traced still further. It appears in a striking manner in the absence from the penal code of the Mosaic Law of concrete penalties for unbelief. Heresy is not legally punishable except if it leads to "Abodah Zarah," to the worship of false gods. Unlike the transgression of divine commands or prohibitions, for which varying degrees of punishment are assigned, the refusal to accept even the most fundamental principles of Judaism brings with it no physical penalty. The heretic is given no chance of becoming a martyr. The courts of justice do not interfere with him. God alone is his judge, and if he is denied "a share in the world to come" (Mishnah Sanh. x. 1; Maimonides, *Hilkhoth Teshubah,* iii. 6-8), it is a judgment which can only be carried out by God Himself. Human jurisdiction can only apply to deeds, not to thoughts. The punishment of excommunication (*Herem*), occasionally resorted to by the rabbis of former centuries, was intended for the protection of the community against false teaching rather than for inflicting pain upon the heretic. But even this precaution was usually only taken when there was a danger of the views regarded as heretical leading to open transgression of the Law and furnishing a bad example.[7]

[7] Cf. the writer's essay on "Judaism in its Relation to Speculative Thought," *op. cit.*, pp. 11-13.

II

In the foregoing observations no attempt has been made to distinguish between dogma and doctrine, or between principle and precept, so far as the essential requirements of Judaism are concerned. Such an attempt could only lead one into a maze of difficulties. It may be easy to support the view of Abravanel, expressed by him in opposition to Maimonides, that in Judaism every precept is fundamental, that all Biblical injunctions are equally important, because equally divine, and that therèfore "articles of faith," or "dogmas," are alien to the spirit of Judaism. Perhaps the term "dogma" being of alien origin should never have been introduced into Jewish religious philosophy. But all this would not help one to discover the historic Jewish view as to the fixed and binding nature of the essential postulates of Jewish religious teaching and as to the treatment of these postulates as the unalterable foundations of Judaism.

The recognition that such foundations must be discovered and preserved, if the structure of Judaism is to stand and remain our stronghold, is due to the teaching of the seers and sages of Israel of all ages—from Moses downwards. It has penetrated the Jewish consciousness very deeply. It affects the Jew's outlook on life, and it influences his daily conduct. The Jew who exclaims in front of the open scroll of the Law: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast given us the Law of truth and hast planted everlasting life in our midst," and then follows it up with the public declaration: "And this is the Law which Moses set before the children of Israel ac-

cording to the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses," expresses this recognition in an unmistakable manner, and emphasizes its fundamental importance.

Whether we call it dogma or doctrine or categorical assertion is of little consequence. It is always based on experience, on positive testimony—not on metaphysical speculation or theological argumentation—and throughout the ages Jews have lived and died in vindication of the truth of this assertion. It is the categorical nature of this assertion that has made the Jew what he is and always has been—the most important factor in the spiritual development of humanity. If the recognition expressed in this assertion is abandoned, Judaism collapses. One can therefore accept Solomon Schechter's contention that "it is only for God's sake, to fulfill His commands and to accomplish His purpose, that religion becomes worth living and dying for," without being compelled to adopt his conclusion that "this can only be possible with a religion which possesses dogmas," or that the "center" of "all these ideas" is "dogma." [8]

It has also to be borne in mind that the Jew who rejects his people's testimony to the truth of the divine teaching which constitutes his heritage does more than deny an "article of faith." He denies his people's experience and the trustworthiness of its spokesmen. He thus places himself outside the community of Israel. This is why it can rightly be said that such a Jew commits also an ethical wrong. Mendelssohn's contention that such "belief and doubt, consent and dissent, are not directed by our wish-faculty, by will

[8] *The Dogmas of Judaism, op. cit.*, p. 181.

and desire, by fear and hope, but by our cognition of truth and untruth, and are therefore unconnected with the ideas of good and evil," [9] does not hold good when applied to the acceptance or rejection of the bases of the Torah. In this respect the wish *may* be the father of the thought. Fear and hope may direct one's mind, and good or evil may result from the absence of control in the direction of one's thoughts and ideas. This is why it could be said of the first patriarch: "And he believed in the Lord, and He counted it unto him for righteousness." (Gen. xv, 6.)

The construction that is placed by a divinely inspired man, or by a divinely instructed people, upon the facts of nature, upon the events of history, upon the noteworthy experience of an individual or a nation, cannot, and must not, be discarded by one who does not feel the inspiration and is not influenced by the instruction. It cannot and must not be replaced by another construction, which those of another age may evolve by their own reasoning powers or by their own way of reading nature and interpreting history. This is why a religious philosopher like Maimonides, who revered reason and favored freedom of thought, was nevertheless ready to condemn the faithless and to regard the heretic as undeserving of divine grace and as having forfeited "his share in the world to come." This is the attitude taken up by nearly all the rabbinic authorities throughout many centuries.

Difficulties arise when an attempt is made to define the testimony, to state clearly the doctrines it implies and to fix their number. Does, for instance, the belief in immortality, in the incorporeality of God, in *creatio*

[9] *Jerusalem,* Gesammelte Schriften, p. 322.

ex nihilo, in the resurrection of the dead, in the immutability of the Torah, or in the coming of the Messiah, constitute part of the evidence which the history of Israel, and the testimony of its leading spokesman, furnish to the Jewish consciousness? Does the non-acceptance of such teachings have the same effect on the soul of the skeptic as the doubt concerning the existence of God and His control of the universe? Is the refusal to accept those tenets likely to exercise the same influence on conduct as the denial, say, of the fatherhood of God or the divine origin of the Law? It is upon these important questions that the greatest and most authoritative exponents of Judaism have been unable to come to an agreement. Philosophical speculation could not provide the answer. Reference to Biblical texts and traditional conceptions could not demonstrate the truth or falsehood of any of the views put forward by the various groups of thinkers.

But a people's religious genius does not depend on the arguments of individual thinkers or on the conclusions arrived at by learned interpreters of texts, be the interpreters as learned and revered as R. Hillel or Saadiah Gaon. Where profound thinkers and legal luminaries are unable to agree, poets and singers step in and express the people's soul. Thus Maimonides' thirteen articles, which some of our best known religious teachers refused to accept, acquired an impregnable position among the masses of the Jewish people as a result of the victory of poetic imagination and spiritual intuition. The hymns of "Yigdal" and "Adon Olam," which have found their way into our Prayer Book, and have been made to serve as the introduction to the morning service, and also as its

conclusion on Sabbaths and festivals, have done more for the retention of Maimonides' "articles" as essential religious teachings than the elaborate arguments upon which our philosopher based these doctrines [10] and the succinct formulæ in which he finally expressed them.[11] And R. Hillel's dictum as to Israel's Messiah having come and fulfilled his mission in the days of Hezekiah has made no impression on the Jew's fervent faith in the future coming of Israel's Redeemer—the faith which has sustained the Jewish people throughout the centuries, and which has found expression in the prayers that we offer up morning, noon, and evening on every day of the year. On the other hand it must be noted that the Gentile who comes to embrace Judaism, the would-be proselyte, is not even informed of the thirteen articles of Maimonides, and that this is Maimonides' own decision.[12] This is perhaps the best proof that dogma in Judaism has not the same meaning, and does not occupy the same place, as it does in other religious systems. The writer who thought that he was attacking organized religion when he maintained that "the truth of any religion lies not in its dogmas but in its moral beauty and practical imperishability," [13] should have found no difficulty in testifying to the truth and imperishability of Judaism.

III

Faith in God, even if it acquire the character of "knowledge of God," has no meaning unless it is as-

[10] See Maimonides' Commentary to the Mishnah Sanhedrin, X, 1.
[11] See *Authorized Prayer Book,* ed. Singer, London, pp. 89-90.
[12] Maimonides, *Yad Hachazakah,* "Isure Biah," XIV, 2; *Yoreh Deah,* 268, 2.
[13] *North American Review,* CXL, 319.

sociated with the fear and love of God. Fear and love of God have no meaning or value unless they who are animated by these sentiments are led to obey God, to do His will, to follow His ways. "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul; to keep for thy good the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command thee this day." [14] The essence of Judaism could not be expressed so well in any other words. The intimate connection that exists in Judaism between faith and conduct, between spiritual experience and practical life, is here illustrated with remarkable clearness and impressiveness. It renders the conclusion inevitable that if the term "dogma" can be applied to the Jewish teaching as regards the nature of God and His relation to the world, it can be applied with equal justification to the moral duties inculcated by Israel's Torah. Philo, in his *Life of Moses,* already calls attention to the fact that of the two tablets handed down to Israel at Sinai, one deals with the duties of man to God, and the other with the duties of man to man.

But the two halves make one whole. They were engraved by the same divine finger. The injunction "Thou shalt not steal" has therefore the same divine sanction as the proclamation "I am the Lord thy God." Frequently the Torah repeats and emphasizes the words "I am the Lord your God" merely for the purpose of impressing us with the necessity of our fulfilling the commandment that precedes these words. It is also repeatedly brought home to us that love of God

[14] Deut. x. 12-13.

is of such great significance because it leads to love of man. "And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, I am the Lord." No wonder a sage like Hillel was led to the conclusion that the whole Torah was really intended to train man to act kindly towards his neighbor, and that Akiba and Ben Azai adopted a similar view. It is quite in keeping with the prophet's declaration that "what the Lord doth require of thee" is "to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God" [15]—putting the duty towards God last. But even this last duty is explained in the Talmud as referring to acts of kindness towards human beings.[16]

The view must therefore be accepted that in Judaism the principles underlying moral rectitude are as essential and as "cardinal" as the articles of faith which our religious philosophers of the Middle Ages formulated for the purpose of making clear the distinction between Judaism and other faiths. To accept these articles of faith without upholding the principles of moral rectitude would be anomalous. The former would inevitably lose their meaning and their value without the latter. In the significant passage in the Babylonian Talmud [17] in which R. Simlai reduces the 613 commandments and prohibitions of the Mosaic Law to smaller numbers, by referring to utterances of David, Isaiah and Micah, the principles enumerated all relate to moral duties to be fulfilled in the relation of man to man. Even the pronouncement of Habakkuk, which is quoted last, as containing the one great doctrine upon which the Torah is based—"but the righteous

[15] Micah, vi. 8.
[16] B.T. Makkoth, 24a.
[17] Makkoth, 23b. and 24a.

shall live by his faith" [18]—is evidently referred to as indicating that the faith of the righteous controls and guides his life, and that faith thus becomes a sure foundation for rectitude and goodness. It is rectitude and goodness that give faith its real value.

Occasions may arise when the vindication of religious principles or tenets becomes more important than any other aspect of one's moral and spiritual life, and even more precious than life itself. Our sages clearly indicated such occasions, and some of them gave their own lives for the maintenance of those principles, for the "sanctification of the Name," for the demonstration of their faith in the one and only God and of their loyalty to His teaching. The same sage (R. Akiba), who insisted on the importance of the commandment "Love thy neighbor as thyself" as the cardinal principle of the Torah, died a martyr's death in defense of the *whole* Torah and for the safeguarding of the spiritual life of his people. The records of our history are full of such instances. The Jewish martyr could always be heard uttering with his last breath the "Shema' Yisrael," and the Jewish people as a whole has undergone untold suffering because of its refusal to deny the true God or to allow the belief in His unity to be infringed. But the rabbis made it clear that it was the duty of the Jew to adopt the same attitude when compelled to commit a crime against his neighbor; when forced to shed blood or to commit incest. And should Judaism be endangered by his departing in public from the least important law or custom, the Jew is expected to show the same readiness for self-sacrifice

[18] Habbakkuk, ii. 4.

and to preserve the Jewish life of his people at the cost of his own life.

There is no contradiction between all this and the views previously expressed as to the object and aim of the Torah and the value of religious teaching. The lawgiver himself assures us that the nature of the divine statutes and judgments is such that "if a man do them he shall live by them," [19] but not that he shall die by them, the rabbis add.[20] The divine ordinances have been given to us to further and enhance life, and to make it worth living. Both the love of God and the love of man are to serve this great purpose. But if Judaism were to be lost, everything great in life would be lost. And Judaism *would* be lost if the Jewish people were to disappear.

It has always been the conviction of the Jew that the two tables of Sinai stand and fall together. When the Israelites made the golden calf, Moses dropped them both. When he hewed himself new tables they were made "like unto the first," and holding the two tables in his hands he prayed for the people's life.

It is the Jew's supreme duty to preserve Judaism and the Jewish people, and no price is too heavy to pay for the attainment of this end. The fact that individual lives are sacrificed in order that a nation's life may be preserved, that an ideal may be realized, that noble teachings and noble practices may be safeguarded, does not indicate that life is regarded as of little value. On the contrary, the sacrifice is asked for, and is made, for the sake of life itself, and because of the high value

[19] Lev. xviii. 5.

[20] Cf. the writer's essay on "Judaism as the Religion of the Law," *op. cit.*, p. 70.

attached to it. Death is incurred in such circumstances because of the high conception which those who incur it have of the significance and purposefulness and sacredness of the divine gift which life constitutes. This is why the Jewish martyrs of all ages were so ready to give their lives, and the rabbis sanctioned this readiness, when the principles of Judaism were at stake, when the rule of the God of Israel was challenged, when the existence of Judaism and the life of the Jewish people were threatened by powerful forces. And the sacrifice was made just as much in the cause of moral rectitude, goodness and love, as in the cause of the worship of the true God and the enhancement of His glory. For in the Jewish view these two causes are inseparable: they are really one cause.

IV

There is one more question to consider, and it is of the greatest importance that a satisfactory answer should be found for it. The question is a twofold one, and can be expressed thus: Ought the principles of Judaism to be taught in the form of accepted dogmas, and should the teaching of them be given a definite place in the curriculum of the Hebrew school, in the synagogue, in the house of study? As Maimonides' thirteen articles are the only formulated doctrines which can be described as accepted by Jews, the question just put can be simplified and expressed this way: Ought the "thirteen articles of faith" to be made the subject of definite instruction, and be treated in our Hebrew and religious classes as the foundations of Judaism?

The answer to this question depends to a consid-

erable extent on the answer that we have to give to the larger question already discussed in this essay, viz.: Can the articles of Maimonides (or of any other thinker) be given out to the world as the tenets which constitute the essence of Judaism? After all that has been said in the foregoing pages it should be obvious that the answer to the last question can only be in the negative. No series of doctrines that fails to include such essential principles as the selection of Israel, the golden rule, immortality, the significance of holiness, can be regarded as making up the essence of historic Judaism. The authoritative exponents of Jewish teaching throughout the ages have, indeed, given much more time and attention to the explanation and emphasis of some of the latter principles than to some of those included in Maimonides' articles. The Jewish Codes contain no catechisms. The books of a catechistic nature that have appeared in various countries since the end of the sixteenth century, beginning with Abraham Jagel's *Lekaḥ Tob* (Venice, 1587), do not confine themselves to articles of belief, but deal with the Torah as a whole. Some of them deal with all the 613 commandments, and dwell more fully upon precepts to be enacted than upon principles to be accepted.

All the modern manuals for religious instruction that intend to convey the essence of traditional Judaism, and that are worth mentioning, deal with moral rectitude, goodness, matters of ritual, and everything appertaining to conduct, as fully and earnestly as they deal with matters of faith and spiritual postulates. In the Yeshibot and Bate' Midrash of Eastern Europe the Jewish principles of faith are taken for granted. For the student who has acquired a comprehensive knowl-

edge of Bible and Talmud usually knows what Judaism stands for, and needs no coaching in the element of Jewish belief. The rabbi who expounds Jewish law and tradition from the pulpit usually confines his instructions to concrete subjects, for he shares in the traditional reluctance of Jewish teachers to discuss in public metaphysical problems. In his homiletic discourses the Jewish preacher prefers to dwell on the love of God rather than on the transcendental nature of God. Neither of them can therefore be expected to find the essence of Judaism in articles of faith, however fully and wholeheartedly they may accept the doctrines conveyed therein. As faith alone does not render one a conforming Jew, and as the duties of the Jew only begin where the obligations of the adherents of other religious systems often end, the exponent of Judaism deems it more important to inculcate obedience to the divine Law, to train the Jew in doing what has been made known to him as God's will, and to point from faith to life, than to enlarge on the felicity that faith alone may bring on salvation that affects the soul but leaves the body untouched.

But if the essence of Judaism cannot be expressed in articles of faith, no matter how and by whom formulated, it is obvious that such articles ought only to be taught in the Hebrew and religion class if they can be treated as part of a comprehensive system of instruction, as part of the teaching that is derived from the whole of our sacred literature—the part to be conveyed in its proper perspective and in its true relationship to the other elements of Jewish teaching. To put it more simply: Instruction in "articles of faith" should only be given to pupils who have acquired a fair grasp

of the elements of the Torah and of the significance of the positive requirements of Jewish law and tradition. What is essential for the child's understanding of the basis of the Torah can be found in the "Shema," in the story of creation, in the Decalogue, in an outline of the manifestation of God's will and power in the history of Israel. It also seems clear that before a pupil can be impressed with the significance of such a principle as the immutability of the Torah he must know something of the teachings of the Torah and comprehend their lasting value; that before he can become convinced that "all the words of the prophets are true," he must know something of the beauty and loftiness of the message which the words of the prophets convey; that before he can be made to accept the doctrine that Moses was the "chief of the prophets, both of those that preceded him and those that followed him," he must be imbued with a deep reverence for the achievements of Moses as Israel's redeemer and lawgiver and as the medium for the transmission of the voice of God to the ears of man.

And no child should be asked to "believe with a perfect faith" that "the Creator, blessed be He, is the first and the last" before the words can be endowed with meaning for him and his mind is sufficiently developed to appreciate their religious and philosophical significance. On the other hand, such Jewish teaching as that of the freedom of the will and immortality of the soul may be effectively and profitably brought home to the minds of young people, although these doctrines are not expressly included in Maimonides' thirteen articles.

As already shown, it is impossible to say that a true appreciation of the elements of Judaism can only be derived from the study of the formulated creeds which have found acceptance among us. But it can rightly be maintained that the cardinal Jewish teaching regarding God and His relation to man is inseparably connected with the teaching regarding man's own relation to man. The principle of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, with the postulates that are derived therefrom, depend on each other for their acceptance. And Judaism is not merely a code of laws or a text-book of ethics—just as it is not a mere text-book of theology or a system of metaphysics. The living God, the striving people, the eternal Law, they unite to make the unique fabric of Judaism. "Israel and the Law and the Lord are one." It is the categorical assertion of the Jewish genius. It is the conclusion to which the Jewish people came long ago, as a result of its own experience and the interpretation given to its history by its leaders. With this conviction Jews will live on. With this conception Judaism will hold its own against all forces, and will ultimately prevail. With this ideal in view the Jewish people will undergo restoration and regeneration after the centuries of stagnation. The truth of the Jewish teaching will then require no emphasis. The principles of Judaism will then be clearly discernible, and there will be no need to number them or to use stereotyped formulæ for their preservation. In a true Jewish environment, or in a world imbued with Jewish ideals, the elements of Judaism will be safe. Judaism will live and grow and spread, and none will doubt its genuineness.

The psalmist may then sing again in Israel's land:

"God hath spoken once,
Twice have I heard this:
That strength belongeth unto God;
Also unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy;
For thou renderest to every man according to his work." [21]

[21] Psalm lxii. 12-13.

XII

THE JEWS AT THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

BY

CECIL ROTH

XII

THE JEWS AT THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

On September 2nd, 1494, Charles VIII of France crossed the Alps with his army and embarked upon his famous Italian campaign. It is from this point that it is usual to date the close of the Middle Ages. The wars leading out of the French expedition to Naples initiated the Franco-German rivalry which has been the keynote of European politics down to the present day. The Renaissance movement, already in full flood south of the Alps, became broadcast throughout Europe by the international intercourse now intensified. Reformation, already in the air in the Teutonic countries, was accelerated.

The art of printing, invented a few years before, created a revolution in the intellectual world, just as gunpowder, the use of which only now became common, changed the art of warfare and struck a last blow at feudalism. Two years before, men's horizons became widened and the future of mankind was changed by the discovery of America; while it was not long since the last link with the classical world had been snapped through the capture of Constantinople by the Turk. National monarchies were simultaneously being consolidated in England, in France, and in Spain. Such a revolution in human affairs and ideas has never taken place within so short a period at any time before or since.

Let us imagine some well-informed and prescient Jewish scholar-statesman, familiar with courts and affairs as with the traditional lore of his fathers, looking about him at this critical period with an expert eye and observing above all the condition and prospects of his own people: say, Don Isaac Abravanel (1437-1509), the diplomat, financier, and writer, who was at this time living, an exile, in the very city of Naples against which Charles VIII's expedition was directed, and who was destined to suffer acutely by its consequences. This was not the first tribulation of his long and eventful life. In his younger days, he had been forced to flee from Portugal in consequence of a political dispute in which he was implicated, leaving behind him the precious manuscript of his commentary on the Pentateuch. But the event which was uppermost in his mind, as in that of all his generation, was the expulsion of his people from Spain, which had taken place just two years before, in the year of the discovery of America.

The Jews had lived in the peninsula at this period for fifteen hundred years at the very least, antedating thus both the Goths and the Moors. They had produced there the finest flowers of their culture at least since the compilation of the Talmud, culminating in the great school of poets which is eternally associated with the name of Jehudah Halevi, and the philosophy which reached its climax in the exiled Moses ben Maimon. The Christian kingdoms of the Peninsula, as they came to the fore, vied with the Arabs in the favor with which they treated the third important element in the population. Thus Spain came to be looked upon as a perpetual haven of refuge from the

storms of the outer world, and the Jew entered into the general life with a completeness and a zest rarely equaled. But, by degrees, their position had deteriorated. As the Arab menace lessened, the need for conciliating their support decreased. The theological prejudice introduced from without became stronger. In Castile, the usurper Henry of Trastamara (1369-1379) resented their over-enthusiastic support of his half-brother, Pedro (the nominee of the Black Prince), whom he had deposed, and they thus lost the favor of the Court. Their own internal divisions weakened their position and invited hostility. At last, in 1391, a wave of massacres broke out at Seville and swept through the Peninsula in consequence of the fanatical Lenten sermons of the Archdeacon Ferrand Martinez. Excepting in Portugal and in Granada, hardly a single community was spared, from the Pyrenees to the Straits of Gibraltar and beyond. The solitary way of escape lay through baptism, and, for the only time perhaps in the whole of Jewish history, this feeble expedient was widely adopted.

Those who followed this course only added to the difficulties of the situation. By the side of the stalwarts who had remained true to their ancestral faith there was now a considerable body of recent insincere converts (subsequently known as Marranos). Though outwardly professing Christianity, they remained true at heart to the religion of their fathers, to the practices of which they continued as far as possible to conform. To deal with this problem—a very real one in such an age—there was later set up the Spanish Inquisition, which ineffectually endeavored to eradicate this canker of heresy by any means in its power, however fero-

cious, culminating in burning (1478). The task was obviously impossible as long as there remained in the country a considerable nucleus of real Jews to teach their converted brethren, by precept and by example, the practices of the religion of their fathers. Accordingly, on March 31st, 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella, the Spanish rulers, issued the edict of expulsion which was to put an end to the connection of the Jewish people with the country after so many centuries. It was in vain that Isaac Abravanel had thrown himself before his sovereigns in an endeavor to procure the modification of this fatal decree. They were willing to make an exception in his favor, but on the main question they were adamant. By August 2nd—the anniversary, as it happened, of the fatal 9th of Ab, on which so many disasters had befallen their fathers—all professing Jews had to leave the country. In the expulsion there were included as well the more distant possessions of the Crown of Aragon overseas—Sicily and Sardinia—in spite of the fact that the problem of the crypto-Jew was there virtually non-existent.

The precise number of the refugees cannot be ascertained, but it certainly exceeded 100,000 souls. The chronicles of the period, both Jewish and Christian, are filled with accounts of the sufferings of the exiles and of the cruelties with which they were sometimes treated.

For the refugees were far from safe. Don Isaac had the good fortune to be received at Naples; but not all were so lucky. Very many had crossed the border into the neighboring kingdom of Portugal, where King John was induced to receive them on the payment of a poll-tax. His successor, Emmanuel, treated them at

the beginning of his reign with exemplary humanity. Later, however, he desired to secure the hand of a Spanish bride—daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella—by whose means he might unite the whole of the Peninsula under his scepter. The Infanta refused to set her foot in a land defiled by the taint of disbelief, and the Jews were sacrificed to the King's ambition and her fanaticism.

In December, 1496, an order was issued for their expulsion. Unwilling, however, to deprive his country of such valuable citizens, Emmanuel determined to secure their conversion, by fair means or by foul. On the first day of Passover (March 19th, 1497) all the children between the ages of four and twenty were torn out of their parents' arms, baptized by force, and sent away to be brought up as Christians—an unprecedented outrage even in the long story of Jewish martyrdom. Contemporary chroniclers have preserved pathetic accounts of this foulest of persecutions. Many parents consented to undergo baptism so as not to be separated from their offspring. The other adults were ordered to assemble at Lisbon, where shipping would be provided for their departure. Advantage was taken of their concentration to bludgeon them into baptism by brute force with the merest parody in most cases of the proper ceremony. Only a very few of the hardiest were able to escape this fate and to make their way to lands of greater freedom overseas, after undergoing the most terrible hardships.

The recent converts proved, however, no acquisition to the Catholic Church. Almost without exception, they retained in their hearts the utmost fidelity to their old religion, which they transmitted to their chil-

dren after them. The fires of the Inquisition, kindled in Portugal in 1531 (fifty years after its introduction into Spain) proved powerless to stamp out such depth of conviction. Many escaped overseas. Others continued to nourish their Jewish traditions for long generations in the utmost secrecy, until they had become forgotten by the outside world. In our own days, there has been discovered in the hill-country of Portugal a pathetic remnant still faithful at least to the ideals of Judaism and anxious to return to a full reidentification with the religion of their fathers.

Portugal was not the only country to which the baneful example of the Spanish edict of expulsion penetrated. A couple of years later, it was imitated also in the neighboring kingdom of Navarre and in Provence. When the Spaniards conquered the kingdom of Naples a few years later, the horrors of expulsion were known there as well, and Don Isaac Abravanel's own children, highly respected though they were at Court and in learned society, had to take up the wanderer's staff anew. The same took place in a few Spanish conquests in northern Africa, and, towards the end of the century when their rule had become effective, in the Duchy of Milan.

Meanwhile, the Hapsburg ascendancy in Italy had forced the Popes (hitherto far more favorable towards the Jews in practice than most secular rulers) to adopt a policy of reaction. From the middle of the sixteenth century, under the stress of the Counter-Reformation, they began for the first time to enforce consistently the persecutory policy which their predecessors of the Middle Ages had been content to allow to remain a mere ideal. The Jews were driven out of the Papal

States, excepting only Rome and Ancona. Here those permitted to remain were herded up in Ghettos, restricted to the most degrading occupations, and forced to wear at all times the yellow badge of shame to distinguish them from other men. The forced baptism of children, accompanied by their kidnapping to be brought up as Christians, hitherto explicitly condemned, came to be erected almost into a system. The persecution extended to the manifestations of the Jewish intellect, the Talmud being burned and Hebrew literature submitted to a ridiculously severe censorship. The Ghetto system was slavishly imitated in every other city where the Jews were allowed to remain in Italy, hitherto the classic land of Jewish freedom, and it continued in force, a gruesome survival, until the French Revolution, and after.

It was true that the Ghetto was not an unmixed curse. Its massive gates, if they kept the Jews in, served to keep Gentile influences out. In its narrow courts and alleys, there grew up a Jewish life of unprecedented intensity, centered about, but by no means confined to, the synagogue. There was a considerable degree of autonomy, and, however the Jew may have been made to feel when he stirred out of doors, he had at home in the warmth of traditional Jewish life, certain spiritual advantages unknown in a more tolerant age. Nevertheless, the Ghetto was in intention an unmitigated evil. The golden age of the Jewish life in Italy was rapidly drawing to its close.

And elsewhere? Don Isaac Abravanel, whenever he thought of the subject, must have shaken his head sadly. In Italy, the shadow which persecution flung before it might be discerned. In the countries to the

north and west, persecution had come and gone, leaving behind it an utter waste.

The ball had been set rolling almost precisely two hundred years before, in England. This was the last country of Western Europe to be reached by the Jews, who penetrated thither at the close of the eleventh century in the wake of the Norman conquerors. For some time, it had remained a tranquil haven of refuge from the growing storms on the Continent. With the passage of years, persecution had become rife here too (the classical instance of the martyrdom of the community of York in 1191, on the Great Sabbath before Passover, will be remembered as long as the world admires the example of heroism). Simultaneously, the economic functions for which the Jews had hitherto been so useful came to be filled more and more by the Cahorsins and other less scrupulous Continental financiers. Accordingly, the narrow piety of Edward I, after an ineffectual attempt to divert the whole trend of the economic life of the Jews in England, thus had no alternative but to expel them utterly from the country (1290).

This was the first of all the great expulsions of the Middle Ages, and began the migratory movement eastwards which, in the course of the next two centuries, was to clear Western Europe almost entirely of its Jewish inhabitants. For this expulsion, if the first, was not by any means the last. In 1306, Philip le Bel of France followed the example of his English contemporary with the callous inhumanity which generally characterized his actions. Thus came to an end the glorious ancient traditions of French Jewry, inseparably associated with the names of Rashi and the

Tosaphists. The recall of some financiers for a few years from 1315, and on a larger scale from 1350, cannot be counted a real restoration, for it failed to revive to any appreciable extent the old tradition of Franco-Jewish culture. In any case, the final expulsion of 1394 definitely put an end to the connection of the Jews with the kingdom. The Counts of Provence had indeed allowed the Jews to remain in their realms in the south, but, on the acquisition of the province by Louis XII of France, the Jews of Provence too were driven out, before Abravanel's very eyes. Of the ancient French communities, an exiguous remnant was allowed to protract its existence only in Avignon and the other neighboring places subject to the Holy See—always at least tolerant, if nothing more.

From Germany, by reason of its special political condition, split up into a number of warring states, there was no general expulsion. It figures instead as the classical country of Jewish martyrdom, where banishment was employed only locally and sporadically to complete the work of massacre. Ridiculous charges, such as that of ritual murder or the desecration of the Host, were always present to provide a pretext, and were made use of abundantly. The climax had been reached in 1348, at the time of the Black Death, when a wave of massacres and expulsions occurred throughout the country in consequence of an absurd accusation that the Jews had poisoned the wells. The names are on record of something like three hundred and fifty places where massacres took place at this period, while sixty large, and one hundred and fifty small, communities were utterly exterminated. This was the climax of disaster for the Jews of Germany, just as

the great expulsions had been for England and for France. Massacre and banishment continued to occur sporadically thereafter, though the pace slackened from the very paucity of victims. Isolated handfuls of Jews continued to live under precarious conditions scattered here and there up and down the country. None, however, of the more important of the ancient communities had been able to continue its existence uninterrupted save those of Frankfort and Worms (that of Ratisbon, one of the last survivors, was expelled as late as 1519). The survivors were treated with the utmost severity, cooped up in their *Judengasse,* and denied almost all of the rights of men.

It was fortunate for German Jewry that it possessed at this critical moment in its affairs a leader like Joselman of Rosheim (1480-1554), the great shtadlan, whose whole life was one perpetual sacrifice on behalf of his brethren. Whenever any danger threatened, no distance or personal inconvenience could prevent him from journeying to plead their cause, whether before princes or diets or even emperors. Don Isaac Abravanel, had he lived a little longer, would have had frequent occasion to envy his success, though the magnitude of the tasks which confronted the two could brook no comparison.

In the Slavonic provinces on the Western frontier of the Empire, Jews continued to remain without any great disturbance, particularly at Prague, where there was one of the oldest and most important communities of medieval Europe. Their numerical importance and their general influence was not, however, great. In any account of the world's Jewry, the Germanic countries were henceforth hardly to be reckoned. Western

Europe was no longer a factor which counted in general Jewish life.

Conditions were precarious, as perhaps they had never been in Jewish history, either before or since. Ancient Jewish tradition had always dwelled upon the "pangs of the Messiah"—the darkest hour that was to precede the dawn. It is not to be wondered at if at this terrible juncture the martyred people began to look all the more eagerly for the deliverance that was to come and redeem them from all their tribulations. Don Isaac Abravanel (not unmindful, perhaps, of the legendary descent of his family from the House of David) wrote a treatise "The Salvation of His Anointed," in which he endeavored to prove that redemption was near. Others were less theoretical. A wave of eschatological exaltation swept through the Jewish world, and pseudo-Messiahs arose in unprecedented profusion—Luis Diaz, a cobbler of Setubal, among the Marranos of the Peninusla; Asher Lemlein on the Dalmatian coast: and above all Solomon Molko, a Portuguese New Christian, favorite of Popes and princes, excited by the advent of David Reubeni with his pretended mission from the Lost Ten Tribes. All passed away, adding disillusionment to suffering, but enriching Jewish life none the less, not merely through picturesque episode, but by fresh manifestation of the strength of its undying hope.

The deliverance that actually came was less dramatic. As a matter of fact, the prospects for the future were not as dark as may have appeared to less far-sighted contemporaries. Don Isaac Abravanel must have thought frequently in those days, in a spirit of the deepest thankfulness, of that providential fact

that has characterized Jewish history from the days of Esther downwards: "Escape and deliverance shall arise for the Jews from Another Place." Before the blow, according to a rabbinical adage, the Almighty always prepares the healing.

This was the case on the break-up of the Jewish settlement in Palestine, when the communities of Mesopotamia were at hand to take their place. It was the case on the decay of the Gaonate, when the new schools of the West were ready in their turn to take over the sacred torch of Jewish learning. It was so in the seventh century, when a wave of persecution swept through Europe from Constantinople to Toledo, and the people were saved from destruction only by the strength they still retained outside the bounds of the Christian world. It is the case, perhaps, in the twentieth, when threatened Judaism in the Slavonic countries is being sustained by the reservoirs of strength built up during the last few decades on the other side of the Atlantic. But it was never more true than at the close of the fifteenth century, when the Jews, chased mercilessly from the whole of Western Europe, found a providential refuge in the two great empires of the Near East.

Closest to Isaac Abravanel's own heart was Moslem Turkey. It was hither that the vast mass of refugees from Spain and the neighboring countries had directed their footsteps on their expulsion. Many had made their way, under conditions of indescribable hardship, pursued by pestilence and by famine, to the neighboring coasts of northern Africa, where the native Jewish communities were aroused by their efforts, out of a prolonged lethargy. In Morocco, Tunis, Algiers, and

Tripoli the trace of the exiles and of their work is still to be recognized. Further East, in Egypt, they occupied an important social position. In Palestine itself, the refugees reëstablished the Jewish traditions which had been almost extinct since the period of the Crusades, and the foundations for which the noble Italian immigrant, Obadiah of Bertinoro (1450-1500), best known for his commentary on the Mishnah, had so labored to lay a few years previous. In the succeeding generations, there grew up at Safed the mystical school associated with the names of the "Ari," Hayyim Vital, and Solomon Alkabez,—the greatest movement in Jewish life to emanate from Palestine since Talmudic times. It was there that Joseph Caro endeavored to coördinate Jewish practice and thus repair in some measure the ravages caused by the recent disasters through the compilation of his authoritative code of laws, the *Shulchan Aruch*.

But by far the greatest number of the exiles made their way, under the sedulous encouragement of the Sultans, to the central provinces of the Turkish empire. "What!" cried Bajazet II. "How can you call this Ferdinand wise—he who strips his dominions of his most valuable subjects in order to enrich mine?" The superior culture and numbers of the refugees soon assimilated the remnants of the old Byzantine communities, which had managed, in spite of persecution, to protract a decadent existence from remote times. Important Jewish congregations sprang up in all of the greater cities of the Empire, from Constantinople and Smyrna downwards. At Salonica especially, there was established a settlement so considerable that this ancient port was raised to a dominant position in Medi-

terranean trade. The Jews became here in actual numerical predominance, and the city was from this time onwards one of the greatest centers of Jewish cultural and spiritual life—a new Jerusalem, as it was called. Here settled some of Abravanel's own descendants, who continued to shed luster upon the ancestral glories of their house.

Commerce, manufactures, and handicrafts were all introduced or fostered by the refugees, who thus contributed in no small measure to the greatness of Turkey in the coming years. In subsequent battles with the infidel, the Spanish soldiers had good reason to regret the foolish policy which had driven into the shelter of the Crescent Jewish artificers who brought with them their expert knowledge of the manufacture of gunpowder. Some individuals attained to considerable power in the State, such as Joseph Nasi (died 1579), Duke of Naxos, who endeavored to make a beginning of the rebuilding of Palestine by planting a Jewish settlement at Tiberias; or Solomon Ashkenazi, physician to the Grand Vizier, who was sent on an official mission to Venice precisely at a period when that republic had determined to expel the Jews, and procured the withdrawal of the decree (1572).

The Turkish Empire, and the Mediterranean littoral generally, was essentially a refuge for the Spanish Jews, the purity of whose Castilian was envied by hidalgo visitors in later generations. The Judæo-Spanish dialect which almost universally prevails among their descendants even today gives pathetic testimony to their descent from the exiles of 1492. For the communities of northern Europe, another providential haven was available.

Successive waves of persecution had driven the Jews of Germany progressively eastward. The original settlements in the country had been upon the Rhineland—offshoots in the main of the communities of northeastern France. The terrible waves of massacres which began at the period of the First Crusade (1096) tended to scatter the refugees and to spread the area of settlement into the interior of the country, numbers being swelled by the exiles from the successive expulsions from England and from France. The crowning disaster of the persecutions at the time of the Black Death completed the work, driving the refugees more and more towards the east, where a haven of refuge was already prepared.

To the kingdom of Poland, the Jews had no doubt penetrated in early times, and it may well be that the Chazar converts of the eighth century contributed in some measure to their numbers. The early settlement had, however, been interrupted to a very considerable extent by the Tartar invasions of the twelfth century, which had devastated the whole country. In order to foster its recovery, it thereafter became part of the fixed policy of Polish rulers to encourage systematic immigration. In 1264, Boleslaw Bobozny granted a liberal charter to the Jews, whose position in the country was henceforth guaranteed. At the period of the Black Death, when the various rulers in Germany were vying with one another in their maltreatment of their Jewish subjects, the fugitives received from Casimir the Great in Poland consistent protection and encouragement, culminating in his great charter of liberties of 1354. Persecution was not unknown, as the country came more and more under Western influence;

but it was exceptional, and was, generally speaking, kept under control. In consequence, the Jewish population of the country increased apace. The new arrivals brought with them not only their culture but also their language, which they succeeded in imposing upon these whom they found there, with the result that down to the present day the Jewish communities of the country still speak a dialect based upon medieval German. There was little restriction upon their economic activity. Their numbers and importance rapidly grew, and scholarship followed as usual in the wake of population.

Early in the sixteenth century, with Solomon Luria (Maharashal), the author of the *Yam shel Shelomo,* and Moses Isserles, the Ashkenazic supplementor of the *Shulchan Aruch,* Polish Jewish scholarship came into its own, and it remained predominant in Europe for many long generations to come. There were Yeshivoth galore, where Talmudic learning was intensively cultivated night and day, and from which came great scholars to act as the spiritual leaders of their people, both in Poland and in the neighboring lands. The smallest village boasted its sages and its House of Study, no less surely than its place of worship. Internally, the communities enjoyed a very considerable measure of autonomy. At their head stood the "Council of the Four Lands," with the authority and consideration almost of a supreme Parliament, and referred to with deference throughout the Diaspora. Jewish life was cultivated with an intensity equaled at few periods since the break-up of the Jewish state.

It was only after the terrible massacres at the hands of the Cossacks at the time of Chmielnicki's revolt in

1648 that the glory of Polish Jewry was broken. From this period dates the beginning of the second westward sweep of the Jewish masses which virtually created the modern communities in Western Europe and especially America, became intensified through the Russian persecutions at the close of the last century, and was checked after its work was almost done only within very recent years.

In the East, therefore, both under the Cross and under the Crescent, in the snow-swept plains of the Vistula and the sunny havens of the Mediterranean, there was as always, "escape and deliverance" for the storm-tossed Jew of the West—a providential refuge in which he might find shelter until the hurricane should pass. To the mind of one situated like Don Isaac Abravanel, however, this can have afforded only a bitter consolation. He had seen before his very eyes the destruction of the immemorial glories of Spanish Jewry. His own family had been driven into exile, and considered themselves fortunate to have escaped—most of them—with their lives. Behind in the Peninsula there had remained only those less stalwart or more unfortunate who had avoided expulsion through the adoption under duress of an outward disguise of Christianity. His own grandson—child of his brilliant son, Don Judah (Leone Ebreo), author of the epoch-making *Dialoghi di Amore*—had been torn out of his parents' arms in Lisbon and baptized by force, being dead forever to his family. There in the Peninsula was a whole limb of the Jewish race violently torn away and (as it appeared) lost to it for all time.

So it seemed. Yet, as a matter of fact, some good was to come even out of this. As we have seen, the

passage of time, and all the cruelties of the Inquisition proved powerless in the event to eradicate the memory of Judaism from the hearts of these forced converts and their descendants. The autos-da-fé could burn their bodies, but they could not destroy their convictions. Immediately they had the opportunity to arrive in countries of greater freedom, whether after twenty years or after two hundred, the Marranos hastened to throw off the disguise of Christianity and to return in full flood to the religion of their fathers. Thus were laid the foundations of the modern communities of France, Holland and England, from which the Jews had hitherto been rigorously excluded. The last was indebted especially to the self-sacrificing efforts of Menasseh ben Israel (1604-1657), who prided himself on the fact that his children were descended through their mother, from Abravanel's family. The culture of these Marrano immigrants, coupled with their noble traditions and their high social status, did a great deal to smooth away the prejudice which had hitherto existed between Jew and Gentile, and to prepare the way for the influx of less polished German, and later Polish, Jews which followed. Thus an unprecedented disaster resulted ultimately in a large measure of good.

There was one more bright spot upon the distant horizon, though Don Isaac Abravanel can hardly have realized it. In his position of authority about the Spanish court, it is more than likely that his opinion was asked about the plans of Christopher Columbus and his prospects of success. Be that as it may, it was in the very month in which the decree was issued for the expulsion of the Jews from Spain that the adventurous navigator set out on the voyage that was to end

in the discovery of America—equipped with Jewish astronomical tables, backed by Jewish money, and accompanied by comrades of Jewish parentage. The Marranos, in great numbers, were quick to follow these pioneers to the new-found land of promise. They were soon tracked down by the Inquisition. Many of them therefore escaped thence to other parts of the New World, under the rule of more tolerant powers. Thus there was prepared the way for that settlement of the Jews on the mainland of North America which was to be so real a haven of refuge for the Jewish people in times of persecution in after years. The Renaissance, from one point of view, ushered in for the Jew his Dark Ages. Nevertheless, in the general decay, there were the germs of a better state of affairs which led ultimately to what was, in a very real sense, a New Birth.

The contemporary observer could not easily see the good that was to come out of evil. Before Don Isaac's eyes, there was only darkness in the immemorial Jewish settlements of the West, with prospects of worse to follow, and illumined by only faint glimmerings of light in the East. We may imagine him turning with a sigh from such a survey of external events to the spiritual comfort which he carried within himself. His own storm-tossed life was typical of his age. From Naples, whither he had withdrawn on the expulsion from Spain (itself by no means the first of the trials of his adventurous career) he was driven on the approach of the French armies to Sicily. But in Sicily, already under the rule of Spaniards, no Jews were allowed, and he went from there to Corfu. Hence he returned for a short space to the mainland, settling

at Monopoli; but he anticipated the later expulsion and retired from here to Venice, where he died. At every stage in his long pilgrimage, he earned the respect of the civil authorities, being employed even in his last days in negotiating a treaty between the Serenissima and his native Portugal. At every interval, he turned for solace to the comfort of literature, and his Odyssey is to be read in scattered notes interspersed in the commentaries which have immortalized his name in the memory of the Jewish people more than his diplomatic activities and more than his worldly success. He was a type, in his life, of the Jew at the close of the Middle Ages—in all his sufferings, all his wanderings, all his tribulations. But he was typical no less in the other side of his career. Those intellectual interests characterized in his writings were intensely representative of his race. As they sustained him in time of trouble and gave his storm-racked life solace and direction in intervals of peace, so the intellectual treasures of the Jewish people continued even at this darkest hour to preserve its unity, to inspire its existence, and to save it from disaster. Thus it was brought out, sore tried but unscathed, to face the gentler conditions but perhaps no less difficult problems of the modern world—to the New Life to which the disasters of the close of the Middle Ages inscrutably led up.

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